



CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP

AND

OTHER SERMONS



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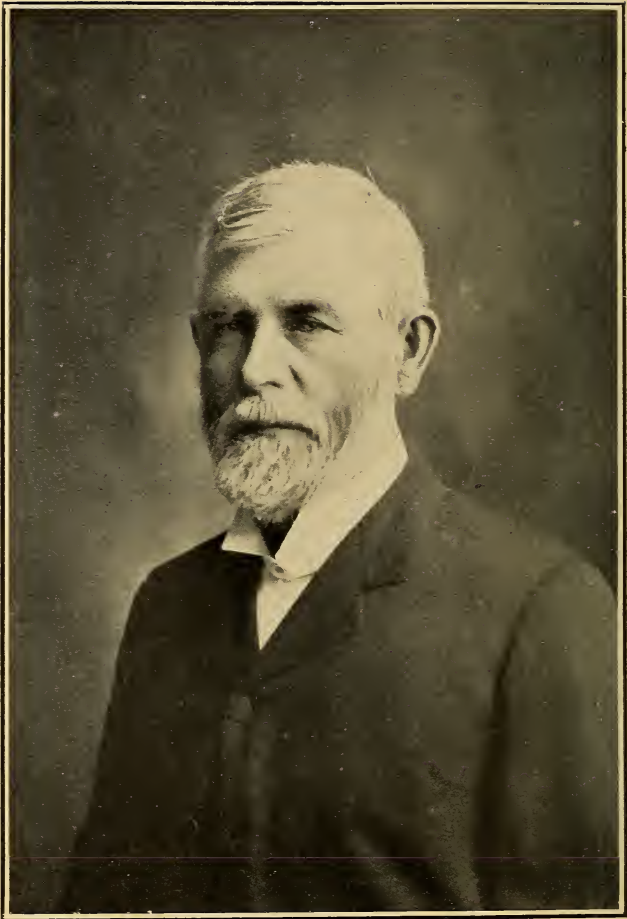












S. R. HARSHMAN

# CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP

AND OTHER SERMONS

BY

S. R. HARSHMAN

*Author of "Sermons on Familiar Subjects"*

EVANGELIST AND PASTOR OF  
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST

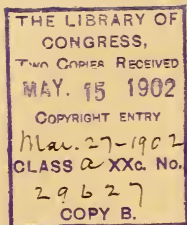
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WHEN I published my former volume of sermons entitled "Sermons on Familiar Subjects" I thought of doing more writing, but waited to see how my work should be received by the public. Being aware of the unpopularity of the gospel I preach, I did not expect any great demand for my published works. In this I have not been disappointed. However there has been sufficient interest manifested in what I have published to encourage me to further efforts. But this of itself would not afford sufficient motive for writing this book, though the want of it might prevent its publication. My principal reason for further encroaching upon the time and attention of the public is the persuasion that I have something to say that is worth saying, and that is worthy of the thoughtful consideration of intelligent men. I have paid some attention to style of composition, and have endeavored to avoid that extreme sententiousness which characterized some parts of the former volume. But while not neglecting euphony, I have endeavored not to sacrifice clearness and force. I

have made no efforts after elegance of diction, but have written plainly for plain people.

The subjects treated in this volume are more out of the ordinary than those considered in the former volume. Yet they are of great interest and of practical utility. They are, however, seldom noticed by modern preachers. With these explanations the work is left to the judgment of the reading public.

S. R. HARSHMAN.

SULLIVAN, ILLINOIS, Jan. 18, 1902.

## CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP

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LET every soul be subject unto the higher powers, for there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.—Rom. xiii : 1.

FOR our conversation is in heaven.—Phil. iii : 20.

THE relation of Christians to human governments is a question of great interest and practical importance. Our conception of that relation depends mainly upon our views of the attitude of human governments toward God and His government. If human governments are in harmony with God's will, and if the great intention of Christianity is to bring them more and more into harmony with God's law, then certainly God's people should not only participate in those governments, but should dominate them. If, on the other hand, human governments as they now exist, are in rebellion against God, and are destined to destruction before Christ can reign on the earth, then Christians can have no part in them without disloyalty to God.

That human governments as they now exist get their authority from God, or that they are in harmony with His will, would be difficult to prove. It is true that the Apostle Paul declares "The powers that be are ordained of God." But what is the force of this declaration? The word in the original Greek here translated "ordained" is "*tet-agmenai*," which in the marginal reading is translated "ordered." The verb "*Tasso*" signifies primarily "to set in order, to arrange." It is a military term, and refers to the placing of soldiers in ranks, etc. We learn from this language of the Apostle: 1st. That God is the author of civil government. 2d. That He arranges the governments of this world, has supervision over them, and they exist by His permission; so that to rebel against the existing order of things is to resist the order of God. Whatever government the Christian is placed under is the will of God to him; and he is not to resist that power under pain of condemnation. No government can be so oppressive as to justify the Christian in engaging in an insurrection or a rebellion against its authority. The government of the Roman Empire at the time this epistle was written to the Romans was probably as corrupt and oppressive as was ever known, yet



God's people were commanded to be in obedience to it. But while this is true, it is not to be inferred that God was the author of this pagan government, or that it was in harmony with His law or His will. It is represented in Revelations under the figure of a great red dragon, and as being desirous of devouring the man-child, the progeny of the woman clothed with the sun, no doubt representing the Church of Christ. The man-child represents a Christian civil government which came into being in the year 313 A.D., when Constantine confessed conversion to Christianity, and displaced paganism with the new religion. This man-child was born in due time, having been conceived at Pentecost, and was born two hundred and eighty years afterward ( $313-33=280$ ). This man-child, it is declared, is to rule all nations with a rod of iron. This will be fulfilled after the second coming of the Lord, as is promised in Rev. ii:26, 27, "And he that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron." This pagan Roman government then, which was in opposition to Christ's kingdom, could not have been in harmony with God's government, or have been authorized by Him. And if this

government was not of God to which the Apostle particularly refers, we have no authority to make the claim for any human government now existing, so far as that claim must rest upon the language of the Scripture under consideration, viz., Rom. xiii: 1, 2.

This Roman government, which St. Paul declares was ordained of God, was not only pagan, but it was a persecuting power. By its authority our Lord was crucified, Stephen was stoned, Paul was beheaded, John cast into the boiling oil, and tens of thousands were martyred. They were tortured, cast to the wild beasts in the arenas, burned at the stake, starved in dungeons, racked and torn. Great numbers of Christians apostatized, being compelled, on pain of death, to abjure their religion and offer sacrifice to the false gods of Rome. Is it possible that such a savage, murderous power was of God and acted as his vice-regent? Certainly God would then have been divided against Himself, and how then could His kingdom stand? The supposition is preposterous and absurd. There are some governments of the present day which claim Divine authority, but this is not true of the government of the United States. The American people repudiate the doc-

trine of the Divine right of kings or other rulers, and affirm in their Declaration of Independence, that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. This government is founded upon the right of the majority; not a Divine right, unless we accept that blasphemous doctrine, "*vox populi, vox Dei*," that when the majority speaks, God speaks, which would make God call for the death of His own beloved Son; since the majority of His countrymen called for His death.

As we fail to find support in the Scriptures for the claim that existing human governments have Divine authority, or that they are in harmony with the Divine will, I will undertake to show, on the contrary, that these governments are in rebellion against God, and are a practical denial of His rights. As was said a while ago, God is the Author of civil government among men. In that sense "There is no power but of God." He is a God of order. Order is said to be Heaven's first law. He turns chaos into kosmos. "He spoke and it was done: He commanded and it stood fast." So when man was created and placed on the earth, for the preservation of order and peace, a form of civil government was given him, the

only form of government which God ever authorized. It is called *Patriarchal*. Under this form the father governed all his descendants. In other words it was family government, the most likely to prove just, merciful, and mild. It seems that even before the Deluge men discarded this form of government, since we read that the earth was filled with violence. But after the Deluge it was established again in the family of Noah. This kind of civil government gave little or no opportunity for war or conquest. It curbed ambition and the love of power. It "Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne, or shut the gates of mercy on mankind." Since each patriarch ruled his own descendants only, his subjects were comparatively few and his authority limited. The government was in every sense paternal, and calculated to secure the greatest good to the governed. It could not be tyrannical or oppressive. Such is God's idea of what civil government should be. It is as far removed from man's ideal as can well be. Each subject was connected with the ruler by ties of blood and filial reverence. But this happy state of affairs could not long last. Man's lust for power could not long be circumscribed within such narrow boundaries. We are informed in Scripture

that a man arose who became a "Mighty Hunter before the Lord"; or, as Dr. Adam Clarke translates the passage, "A mighty rebel against God." This man founded an empire, called the Chaldean or Babylonian, afterward merged into the Assyrian, empire.\* So far as we can learn from history, sacred or profane, this was the first departure from the Divinely established civil government. We are told that the beginning of his kingdom was Babel or Babylon. Since Babylon was the capital of the first empire founded in rebellion against God's form of civil government, apostasy in religion is also called Babylon. So rebellion against God in government, either civil or ecclesiastical, has produced confusion and disorder. I shall now show that the various governments of the earth, especially those included in what is commonly called Christendom, are of the same nature, and intimately connected with the first great empire founded by Nimrod. But allow me first to digress to speak of the government of the Israelites, God's peculiar people. Some time after the rebellion of Nimrod, God called out of Chaldea a man called Abram, and directed him to migrate to a strange land which he should afterward be shown. Abram

\* See Rawlinson's "Five Great Monarchies."

started, but stopped on the way until the death of his father who had accompanied him thus far on his journey. He then resumed his travels and reached finally the distant land which God had promised to give to his descendants. Here he dwelt in tents with Isaac his son and Jacob his grandson, heirs with him of the same promise. They were still under the divinely appointed form of government. Their descendants, after long bondage in Egypt, were brought again into the land of Canaan, by Moses and Joshua. There they continued under the same form of government, led against their enemies by Judges, divinely appointed as the occasion required, until the time of Samuel the prophet. Then they rebelled, and asked for a king, that they might be like the nations round about them. When Samuel complained to the Lord about it, he was informed that they had rejected God's government in desiring a king. But God still overruled in the matter by choosing their king for them. But after the first few kings, God's authority was rejected even in this matter, and kings reigned without Divine appointment, son succeeding father. Thus we see God's form of civil government was universally rejected.

To show the relation of existing governments to the empire founded by Nimrod, the reader is

referred to Dan. ii: 31-45. In the vision of Nebuchadnezzar here recorded, a great image, a monster man, was seen: his head of fine gold, his breast and arms of silver, his belly and sides of brass, his legs of iron, and his feet and toes of mixed iron and clay. The government instituted by God would be represented by an ordinary man of flesh and blood. The many differences between the two can be easily seen. While the empires included in this image do not comprise all the nations of the earth, they include those important ones which figure in history, and which dominated the world. One feature of this image which strikes one as curious is the fact that each succeeding empire is represented by a metal inferior in value to the preceding one. This does not appear to be accidental, as in the explanation by the prophet, it is said, the second kingdom should be inferior to the first. Now it was not inferior in extent or power. In fact the last great empire was superior both in extent and power to any preceding one. In what, then, could the inferiority consist? Is it possible that in God's estimation human governments are deteriorating? Men imagine that great progress is being made in the art and science of government. They fondly



imagine that the ends for which governments are instituted among men are being much more generally and surely secured than ever they were in the past. That life, liberty, and property are better safeguarded under present forms than they were in the past centuries. But is this true? Not if God's Word is true. In reality, the government of the Assyrian empire, in all those points which make governments valuable, was as superior to existing governments as fine gold is superior to mixed iron and clay. This is God's judgment in the matter. And can we not see some reason for thinking the same way? There is such a fear of governmental tyranny among the people in general, that they are swiftly drifting into anarchy, the absence of all government. Their attention is steadily directed toward a point, from which no danger threatens, while they are rushing into the jaws of an undiscovered danger; an evil which will most certainly overwhelm them. Human government in rebellion against God will prove such a disastrous and awful failure in the end, that men in general will welcome the Kingdom of Christ as the only means of rescuing them from the results of their own folly and madness. To this end we are fast hastening.



The head of fine gold represents the Chaldean, at that time merged into the Assyrian, empire. The next kingdom or empire arising, inferior to the first, is the Medo-Persian, under Cambyzes and Cyrus. Being composed of the two nations, the Medes and the Persians, it is fitly represented by the two arms of the image. In Dan. vii: 5, this Medo-Persian empire is represented under the figure of a bear, while the Assyrian empire is represented by a winged lion. The third empire is represented by the belly and sides of the image composed of brass. This represents the Macedonian empire under Alexander, called The Great, and his successors. In chapter vii it has the emblem of a winged leopard; the four wings representing the rapidity of Alexander's conquests. Each of these two later empires subverted and overthrew its predecessor. Each one increased in power and extent of territory compared to the one before it.

The fourth empire, represented by the legs of iron, is the Roman dominion. In Dan. vii this empire is represented by a nondescript beast, unlike anything in nature. "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly: and it had

great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns" (verse 7). This figurative description of the Roman empire is very significant. Its great power and the completeness of its subjection of other nations are clearly shown. Its diversity from the preceding empires, mentioned by the prophet, no doubt consisted principally in its forms of government. The preceding empires had been absolute monarchies. Rome had, at different times, seven different forms of government. But the prevailing form was republican; and the citizens of Rome had an unconquerable repugnance to the name of king. Even under the imperators or emperors, Rome was called a republic. The two legs of the image are probably intended to show the division of the Roman empire into the two parts, Eastern and Western, of which the capital of one was Constantinople, or the city of Constantine, and of the other division the capital was Rome, which was formerly the capital of the whole empire.

The feet and toes of the image represent the final divisions of the Roman empire into the existing states of Europe. In the vision of the beasts,

(chapter vii) these divisions are represented by the ten horns of the fourth beast. In Rev. xii: 3, the ten horns of the great red dragon represent these same divisions. Also in chapter xiii: 1, 2, the ten horns of the beast which took the dragon's seat mean the same thing. This ten-horned beast is mentioned again in Rev. xvii: 3. This beast described in chapter xiii, as being like a leopard, and having the mouth of a lion and the feet of a bear, represents the second Roman empire originating under Charlemagne, in 800 A.D. It is the beast "that was, and is not, and yet is." That is, the Roman empire existed, then ceased to exist, and then came into being again. The harlot spoken of in chapter xvii as seated on the beast, is the apostate church which is in league with, and supported by, the civil power. The map of Europe is not constant, but changes take place now and then; yet the ten horns approximately represent these divisions at any time. The nations of the Western Hemisphere may not seem to be included in this prophecy, but when it is considered that their inhabitants are emigrants from these European countries and the descendants of such emigrants, they may be consistently included. It is true also that in the United States the

apostate church is not supported by the civil power in the same sense in which it is done in Europe. No form of religion is established by law, nor are the ministers of religion supported from the public purse. Yet this church is recognized by the laws of the land, her ministers are made chaplains in the army and navy, and in the various legislative bodies of the land: she is incorporated so as to own property, and this property is exempt from taxation; and in various other ways she is recognized and supported by the civil power.

From all these things we learn that the governments existing to-day are the legitimate successors of the government of Nimrod, who was the arch-rebel against God, who set up the first rebellious empire. In God's view, the empires of the past and present are parts of one stupendous whole represented by the Monster Man of Nebuchadnezzar's vision. It will not be the fate of these nations to merge peacefully into the Kingdom of our Lord. We discover for them, in the Scriptures, a far different fate. These kingdoms composed of mixed iron and clay, lack the unity and strength of the preceding empires. Popular opinion, which, like the potter's clay, is so plastic and so easily moulded into one form and then into another by

the craft of men, is a constant weakness in the governments of to-day. Under the former empires no such thing was known as popular opinion. This weakness hampers and handicaps those in authority. It is a power that must constantly be deferred to, and yet its whims cannot be foreseen. Thus the plans of government must be carried forward, like a ship sailing against the wind, by tacking, first to this side and then to that side, through fear of the shifting of public opinion. That government which depends for support upon public opinion must necessarily be vacillating and uncertain in all its plans and performances. It cannot move forward directly. So the governments of the present day are "partly strong and partly broken."

In Dan. 11:34, 35 we read: "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands which smote the image upon his feet, that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole

earth." In the 44th verse the explanation is given of those verses just quoted. "In the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall brake in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." In Dan. vii which gives the account of the vision of the four beasts referred to above, in the 13th and 14th verses we find another description of the same event: "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." That the kingdom of Christ is here described is not doubted or disputed; but there is a difference of opinion as to what Kingdom of Christ is referred to. Those who deny the premillennial coming of our Lord endeavor to make it appear that the spiritual kingdom or church of Christ is here described. But there are two fatal objections to this exposition. First. The time of the

appearance of this kingdom is far distant from the beginning of the Christian era. Christ's advent occurred when the Roman empire was in its glory, long before the feet, representing the second Roman empire, and the toes, representing the present kingdoms of Europe, were in existence. The little stone is said to begin to smite the image upon the feet, but Christ's spiritual kingdom was set up eight hundred years before the image had any feet, and twice that long before it had any toes. If Christianity, when it was introduced into the world, had attacked the image, it would have, of necessity, begun to smite the legs of the image and not the feet. The image was complete, toes and all, before the little stone began to smite, and that is nearly two thousand years later than the advent of Christianity: altogether too great a discrepancy. Second. It is not and never was, any part of the mission of Christianity to attack, or in any way antagonize existing human governments. Nothing is more plainly set forth in the New Testament than the duty of God's people to submit to the governments as they find them, good or bad, and to recognize existing conditions as the will of God to them. When the Jewish patriots, who opposed submission to the Roman authority,



endeavored to engage Christ on their side of the mooted question of the lawfulness of paying tribute, they could get no further expression from him than the injunction, "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that be Cæsar's, and unto God the things that be God's." They found in him no encouragement to resistance to established authority, however galling it might be to national pride. Christianity teaches submission, but it does not inculcate patriotism. It was the pagan Greeks who first taught the duty of patriotism, and who esteemed it one of the highest virtues; and it is but a pagan virtue still. There is not one word in the whole New Testament recommending such a virtue. It is not once mentioned. Whatever influence Christianity may have upon civil governments is wholly indirect and gentle. It restrains human passion, and inculcates justice and mercy. Its influence is transforming, but not destructive. If Christianity were universal, mankind would come back again to the simple government given him in the beginning. National boundaries would be obliterated, inherited enmities and prejudices would disappear, and all mankind would be one brotherhood. But no violence would be done to existing governments. They would disappear simply



because no longer necessary. Since Christianity inculcates submission to existing governments, and does not attack them or tolerate resistance to them, it cannot be referred to, or represented by, the little stone which smote the image on the feet. It is, therefore, to be applied to the Kingdom which Jesus will set up at "His appearing and Kingdom." We are told that His Kingdom is to rule all nations with a rod of iron and break them in pieces as a potter's vessel is broken. It is evident that those governments that are to be so violently destroyed at His coming, must be in opposition to Him and His government. They are not simply displaced, but are utterly annihilated, as having nothing of value in them. They are usurping governments ruling in contravention of Christ's right, as it is said in Ezek. xxi: 27, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him." These kings rule without right then: their governments are "*de facto*," but not "*de jura*," governments. God never divested Himself of the right of governing mankind, and He has committed all government to His Son. He is the only lawful potentate; all others are pretenders and usurpers. We are told that the Father has

put all things under His feet. This is in prospect: it is not yet accomplished. And what are these things that are put under His feet? II Cor. xv:25, we read: "For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." And the preceding verse, "When he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power." All these latter then are his enemies. They are the "Kingdoms of this world" which shall become the "Kingdom of our Lord, even of his Christ." In Christ's temptation in the wilderness, Satan lays claim to the kingdoms of the world, and this claim is nowhere disputed. He is declared to be "The God of this world." II Cor. iv:4, James tells us that "The friendship of this world is enmity against God." It seems clear from these and many other statements of Holy Writ, that there is a system of evil on the earth, of which system the Devil is author and Lord, which is in opposition to God; and Satan himself claims the governments of the earth as belonging to that system, and this claim the Lord Jesus himself does not dispute. As has already been said, the Lord Jesus is rightful ruler of the earth, having been promised this dominion by His Father, and is being kept out of possession of His own by the refusal of mankind

to submit to His righteous sway. This state of things is referred to in a parable recorded in Luke xix: 12-27. Here a certain nobleman is said to go into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. Here Christ evidently refers to Italy as the far country to which this nobleman went. And this leads me to call your attention to matter I forgot to speak of in the proper connection. It is said of the fourth beast in Dan. vii, which had great iron teeth, that it "devoured and brake in pieces and stamped the residue with its feet." It seems not to have used its teeth on all its conquests, some were merely stamped upon with its feet. In this Rome differed from the empires preceding it. They uniformly overturned the governments of the countries they conquered, and amalgamated them with the empire, and governed them with Satrops appointed by the central authority. The only exception to this rule that I think of is Alexander's conduct toward King Porus in Western India. And this might not have long continued had Alexander lived. His soldiers refused to follow him further, and he was compelled to turn back before finishing the conquest of India. But Rome did not act uniformly in the matter. Some governments were

entirely overthrown and the country governed by Consuls or Deputies, Roman citizens appointed by the Roman Senate. This was done in most cases. In other instances, the conquered provinces were permitted to retain their own form of government, and, in some instances, their own kings, being required to pay tribute to Rome in token of their subjection to the Roman empire. These the beast is said merely to stamp with his feet. Judea was in this residue, and the sceptre did not depart from Judah until after the birth of Christ. But those who reigned in these kingdoms, so leniently treated, held their authority from the Roman Senate. So on the death of any ruler, his successor was forced to get his authority confirmed by the Roman Senate; and this was not only a costly matter, but often required a journey to Rome. It is to this circumstance our Lord refers when He represents the nobleman as making his journey into a far country to receive his kingdom. The nobleman in the parable is intended to represent our Lord, who has gone to Heaven to receive His kingdom from His Father. Heb. x: 12, 13, "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made

his footstool." He has gone to receive his kingdom *and to return*. The servants of his house to whom he distributed the money, commanding them to occupy till he came again, represent real Christians. The unprofitable servant represents those who fall away from their fidelity. His citizens who hated him represent the world in general who refuse his authority and set up governments of their own. The nobleman's return, having received his kingdom, represents Christ's second coming to reign on the earth, when all His enemies shall submit to His sway.

The emblems of these kingdoms or empires show them to be out of harmony with the will of God. A lion, a bear, a leopard, and a beast exceeding terrible, with great iron teeth, cannot be supposed to represent God's ideal of civil government. They represent cruelty, rapacity, love of dominion, and all those properties diametrically opposed to that justice and righteousness which characterize the Divine government. It cannot be supposed that such beasts of prey could properly symbolize any governments for which God could stand sponsor. Consequently when Jesus the rightful ruler comes He will not use these hostile powers for the government of the world, but will utterly

destroy them. "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floor; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them."—Dan. ii:35. What language could express more complete destruction! Not a vestige of these governments left; not a principle preserved. Of all the results of human wisdom and experience in the science of government, not one thing of any value will be found: nothing worth preserving. There was no place where a single item of it could be used. "No place was found for them." How humiliating! What a dismal failure! Human governments are based upon compromise: natural rights must be surrendered that security may be assured. Human rights must compromise with human greed. But in Christ's government there will be no compromise. Its cornerstone is *righteousness*, and there is no compromise in righteousness. What a glorious spectacle to see the world ruled in righteousness! What a contrast to the existing state of things. "Then shall wars and tumults cease." Violence and oppression will be unknown, fraud and dishonesty will have vanished forever. Man shall no longer rob his fellow-man,

nor shall they hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain, and this mountain shall fill the whole earth. "And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." — Dan. ii: 35. Blessed consummation! The Lord hasten it! It seems clear then that these governments, so utterly repudiated and destroyed could not have been according to God's will. We conclude then from the preceding arguments that existing human governments are antagonistic to God's government, and usurpers of His rights: that they form a part of a great system of evil existing on earth, of which Satan is the god and author; a system constructed to hold mankind in a state of disloyalty to God, and to supply the place of the Divine arrangement and of that system of righteousness which would prevail, were mankind loyal to the government of God.

This much being established, it will be proper in the next place to show what is the relation of God's people to these governments. The answer seems to be evident. It is plain to be seen that they cannot become a part of that evil and disloyal system, without being guilty of disloyalty to God. The attitude which they are to maintain toward these governments is plainly set forth in



the New Testament. Since it is God's will that these usurping powers should continue for a time, He commands His people to recognize them as *de facto* governments, and to yield obedience to them. As mankind in general will not submit to God's government, and since some kind of government is essential to maintain order among mankind, that the Divine purposes concerning the human race may be wrought out, God makes use of these rebellious powers to accomplish His ends. "He maketh the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder of wrath he restrains." Though man is in rebellion against God, He has not surrendered His authority over him; and what power and authority man possesses and exercises, he does it simply by God's permission. Satan may rule in the kingdoms of men, but God overrules. "Man proposes, but God disposes." He manifests His great wisdom and power by using the machinations of His enemies to accomplish His own beneficent designs. These hostile powers are under His control, and He marks the limits beyond which they cannot pass. So it is said, "There is no power but of God." Whatever may be the plans and designs of the rulers of the nations, whatever their motives and ambitions may be, God,



that sitteth in the Heavens, manages and controls all these according to His own good pleasure.

“Deep in unfathomable mines  
Of never-failing skill,  
He treasures up His bright designs  
And works His sovereign will.”

Since God rides upon the whirlwind and directs the storm, His people are instructed to submit to existing governments, knowing that their Father is at the helm and is managing all these things. They are instructed to pray for kings and all those in authority, that they may be allowed to live peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty.

It may be objected that the wild beasts of Daniel's vision may well represent those pagan empires of old, but that they do not properly represent the “Christian” governments of Europe and America. I have shown that these governments are a part of the same great image, and that they are represented by the 4th beast which was great and terrible. But let us look at these governments from the standpoint of reason alone, and see if they have any real claim to the name of “Christian.” As God chose wild beasts to represent these savage pagan empires, what do

these "Christian" governments choose as their emblems. Do they choose lambs, doves, or innocent domestic animals as their emblems? Not so. They choose lions, bears, eagles, beasts, and birds of prey. And do these emblems properly represent them? They most assuredly do. No one has ever noticed or pointed out any incongruity in these emblems. In what particular do these governments differ from those of former ages? I know of no essential difference. They are beasts of prey, devouring the weaker nations. A large part of their revenues is used in providing implements and instruments of warfare on land and sea. There is really no peace between them; simply an armed truce; each one straining every nerve to get an advantage over the other, in point of preparedness for war and ready at a moment's notice to engage in the fray. Their traditional enmities and mutual jealousies are notorious. It is plainly to be seen how they love one another (?) And are these belligerent, selfish, grasping nations deserving of the name of Christian? In China the profession of a soldier is regarded with contempt; in "Christendom" it is most highly honored. But poor China is benighted by the darkness of paganism. However, it seems to be in a fair way

at present to learn better things, being now under the tutelage of the "Christian" nations, from whom it may learn to encourage war, by exalting the successful warrior into a hero.

There is then no reason for supposing that existing governments are less hostile to God's government than those of prior times, and there is no proof that a Christian owes them any greater allegiance. His attitude toward these higher powers is that of obedience and submission merely. He recognizes the fact that he is outside these organisms, an alien and a stranger. That these governments belong to that world out of which he has been chosen and of which he is no longer a part.

The fact that the Christian is a pilgrim and a stranger is often stated in the Scriptures, but the significance of the statement is not generally perceived. It is often remarked by speakers, especially on funeral occasions, that men are pilgrims, but the explanation given is, that we are here for such a short time, and are so swiftly passing away. But if this is what is meant by being a "pilgrim and a stranger," then it is not peculiar to Christians. It is equally true of saint and sinner. But some are said to be *dwellers* on the earth. Luke xxi: 34, 35, "And take heed to yourselves, lest

at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that *dwell on the face of the whole earth.*" There is a plain distinction made here between God's people and those who *dwell on the earth.* The day of the Lord will inevitably come as a snare on *all the dwellers on the earth*, but not on Christians if they are watchful. Rev. iii: 10, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Rev. vi: 10, "And they cried with a loud voice, how long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" These and other Scriptures that might be quoted show that there is a plain distinction made between Christians, who are called pilgrims and strangers, and the dwellers on the earth. Only those are called pilgrims and strangers, who have expatriated themselves, by forsaking one country in search of another. Abraham's call is a type of that of the Christian. He forsook the land of his nativity and dwelt in the land of Canaan, a stranger in a strange land. There were dwellers

in that land who lived in cities, while Abraham was a stranger, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. At that time God gave him no inheritance in Canaan, not so much as to put the sole of his foot upon. (Acts vii: 5.) But he promised the whole land to him and his seed. We are told that those who dwell in tents declare plainly that they seek a country. (Heb. xi: 14.) God's people under the gospel do not forsake the land of their nativity in the literal sense of moving out of it, nor do they literally dwell in tents. But in a spiritual sense they do both these things. They are actually made citizens of another country, and renounce their citizenship in the land of their birth. By natural birth they become citizens of this world, by their second birth they become citizens of another country. They are born from above, and their citizenship is in heaven. Phil. iii: 20, "For our conversation (*politeuma*, citizenship) is in heaven." The authorized version gives us a poor conception of the meaning of the original. The word "conversation" is used in a different sense now from that given it two hundred years ago. It then usually meant "manner of life, or conduct." But that is an inadequate rendering of the original

Greek. The Greek lexicon gives the meaning thus: *Politeuma*, the constitution of a state, conduct in the administration of state affairs, citizenship; a city life. Mr. Wesley in his "Notes on the New Testament" thus explains it: "*Our conversation*—The Greek word is of a very extensive meaning, our citizenship, our thoughts, our affections, are already in heaven." Dr. Adam Clarke in his "Commentary," thus defines the meaning of the original: "*(Our conversation is in heaven)* Hemon—to *politeuma*, our city or citizenship, or civil rights."

I give these translations of Wesley and Clarke to show that I am not trying to give an unusual or unauthorized meaning to the words. We are plainly informed that the Christian's citizenship is in heaven, and if so, it cannot be on the earth, unless he can have citizenship in two countries, under two different governments at the same time. This we know is not allowable. In Eph. ii:12, we read: "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." And in verse 19, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with

the saints and of the household of God." Christ's kingdom is a commonwealth, each member being a citizen of the same. Though it is a kingdom without a country, its citizens being scattered among the nations of the earth as aliens and sojourners, yet it will come into possession of the earth after awhile and all nations shall serve it. The Israelites, journeying from the bondage of Egypt to the promised land, were a type of the militant church of Christ. They also were a nation without a country, but God dispossessed the Canaanites and gave them a kingdom when their wanderings were ended. In I Pet. ii: 11, it is written: "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." We learn then that sinners are aliens from the commonwealth of Christ's Israel, and saints are aliens, strangers, pilgrims in this world. As no man can be an alien and a citizen of Christ's kingdom both at the same time, neither can he be an alien and a citizen of a worldly kingdom or commonwealth at the same time. The Apostle expressly declares that when a man becomes a citizen of the commonwealth of Israel, he is no longer a stranger or



alien. If a Christian is a citizen of an earthly country, exercising all the rights and privileges of such a position, in what possible sense can he be said to be a pilgrim or alien, that would not be true of any other citizen of the same state? On such a hypothesis all that is said in the New Testament of his being a pilgrim and stranger is made meaningless and untrue. In other words, if a Christian is a citizen of a worldly government, I am bold to affirm that he is in no sense a stranger or pilgrim, except as every sinner may be said to be the same. Any man who claims citizenship here does by that act deny citizenship there. The two are incompatible and cannot co-exist. It is as impossible to have citizenship on earth and in heaven both as to have your treasure both here and there, or your home both here and there. To the *dwellers* on the earth, this is their home, and they feel at home here. This world is good enough for them, except as they think they may improve it. Their treasure is here, their interests are here, their possessions are here. They are in harmony with their environment, and do not realize that "the friendship of the world is enmity against God." To look at their conduct you see no signs



that they are seeking a country. They are as desirous to lay up treasure here as though they were to remain here forever. They strive after the honors of the world and the praise of men, as though they were of the highest value. They buy and sell, and plant and build, just as if there was no other world. Their whole life is concentrated in sublunary things. They may be religious, but their religion is of a kind that fits in with the present condition of things and does not interfere with their worldly success. It is one wheel in the great system now dominating the earth and comes from the same source. "This wisdom cometh not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish." The real Christian is but a stranger here, passing through the world as a pilgrim, a sojourner. He feels himself out of harmony with his surroundings, misunderstood, misjudged. "Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." He is an object of derision to the thoughtless and pleasure-loving, of scorn and contempt to the worldly-wise, of hatred and malice to the votaries of a false religion. Everything about him reminds him that he is away from home, in a strange land. And truly if he desires the country from which he came out, he has abundant opportunity

to return. But now he desires a better, a heavenly country. He sings with Wesley:—

“How happy is the pilgrim’s lot;  
How free from every anxious thought,  
From worldly care or fear.  
    Confined to neither court nor cell,  
    His soul disdains on earth to dwell;  
He only sojourns here.

“Nothing on earth I call my own;  
A stranger to the world, unknown,  
I all their goods despise.  
    I trample on their whole delight;  
    And seek a city out of sight—  
A city in the skies.”

His citizenship, his treasure, his affections, are in heaven; his life is hid with Christ in God; and when Christ, who is his life, shall appear, he also shall appear with him in glory. This is the portrait of a real Christian as drawn by inspiration. These are the lineaments by which he is distinguished.

As the child of God is not a citizen of any earthly country, he takes no part in governing the world. It is no part of his business to try to improve or purify these governments that are in rebellion against God and doomed to destruction at Christ’s coming. He is a spectator only; an interested spectator it is true, because he desires to live a peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty. Because he is a lover of his race he cannot but

be pained at that which causes suffering and distress. His sympathies can but be with justice and righteousness, and against oppression and evil-doing. Yet he knows that there is no remedy for the evils that afflict humanity, but in submission to the righteous sway of the rightful King. His duty is to obey the laws, not to make them. He could favor none but God's laws, and he knows that they cannot be enforced under the present order of things. Carnal men are not subject to the law of God and cannot be made subject. It is a rod of iron which no human power can impose upon mankind. Herein is where many well-meaning people are in error. Suppose they could enact the whole moral law of God into statute law; it would be a dead letter, because it could not be enforced. Under the present system of things, laws must be made to suit existing conditions, not ideal conditions. God himself did not try to enforce the whole moral law upon carnal men. Why? Jesus says that the Divine ideal of the marriage state made it indissoluble except by death or the infidelity of one of the contracting parties. Yet Moses allowed husbands to give bills of divorcement, *because of the hardness of men's hearts*. Are men's hearts any less hard now than then? God saw that to com-

pel husbands and wives in their sinful state, to live together when they hated one another, would be productive of greater evils and more suffering than a system of divorce would engender. Then He had not made provision to conform men's hearts to the requirements of His law. "The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men, everywhere, to repent."—Acts xvii: 30. Now men may have their natures brought into harmony with God's law, and if they will not accept of Divine aid, the standard will not be lowered to suit their carnality. Since God will not lower the standard of morals, His children cannot be a party to such a plan. But human governments are impossible, at present, without compromise between what *is*, and *what ought to be*. Therefore Christians can have no part in such governments. "Neither be partaker of another man's sins: keep thyself pure." All human governments are founded upon force and are dependent upon the power of the sword. In just as far as the Christian makes himself responsible for human government, he becomes responsible for the exercise of this force; for war and bloodshed. Jesus says: "My Kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world,

then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews." — John xviii:36. If it was not lawful for God's people to fight to establish Christ's rightful authority, how can it be lawful for them to fight to establish authority that usurps his right? I know that casuists pretend to distinguish between righteous and unrighteous wars, and insist that while it is unlawful for a Christian to fight in the one, it is lawful for him to fight in the other. But what could be a more righteous war than one waged to establish Christ's authority? But Christians are forbidden to fight even then. I know that a false Christianity feels forced to find some justification for a Christian's fighting, else their religion would not fit into the world system. But the incongruity of a man who professes to love all mankind, even his enemies, being engaged in trying to kill some of them, is too apparent to be explained away. And the disposition, so common in this age to canonize, or make saints of those who die fighting for their country, is wholly pagan and anti-Christian. The old Romans allowed that one who died fighting for his country was fit for paradise; but in their estimation, so also was one who invented useful arts; but that is scarcely accepted by modern

Christians (?) as a sufficient qualification for Heaven. With these the fighter has much the better of it. From the foregoing it is easy to perceive the inconsistency of those who in this country vote, but will not fight, holding war to be contrary to their principles. By supporting a government dependent on force for its maintenance, they become responsible for war, but refuse themselves to engage in it. Such conduct is puerile. I may as well engage in war myself as to authorize others to do so. That human governments are resting on force is so evident as scarcely to need argument. It is an axiom among statesmen, that the surest way to avoid war is to be always prepared for it. How short would be the history of any government which refused to defend itself. Such a country would speedily become the prey of its greedy and rapacious neighbors. It is manifest then that the man whose principles will not permit him to fight, can assume no responsibility for the government of the world.

The Christian's only duty toward human governments is that of subjection. He is to render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's. "Tribute to whom tribute, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor." But

this does not relieve him from the obligation of rendering unto God the things that be God's. In other words, Cæsar has no authority to come in between him and his duty to God. As a rule, the requirements of human governments do not conflict with duty toward God. Such governments are intended to be for "the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well." They are usually "ministers of God to us for good." But there are exceptional cases where it is otherwise. This may be intentional, but is usually unintentional. What must the Christian do under such circumstances? In cases where human authority requires what God forbids, or forbids what God commands? The answer is plain, God's law is the higher law, and its demands are the stronger. In Acts iv: 19 we have the Apostle's answer: "But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye." It is a universally recognized fact that God's authority is paramount; and Peter and John confidently appealed to the conscience of their judges in the matter. They believed it to be an undeniable fact that God must be obeyed rather than man, when there was a conflict of authority. So the Christian must do as these Apostles



did and obey God, and meekly take the consequences of disobeying man. That God was not displeased with their conduct is seen in the favor which he manifested toward them when they had returned to their own company. After reciting the facts to their brethren, and after they had unitedly called upon God for assistance, it is written, verse 31, "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness." This was the express thing they were forbidden to do by the rulers.

It is clear that it is inconsistent for a Christian to vote, for that would be exercising the very power of sovereignty. But there are other things which may not appear so, clear to everyone at first glance. The law of the land declares it to be a crime to conceal a crime. This would make it incumbent on the Christian to become an informer against his fellowmen. Is this always his duty? If I discover a thief stealing my property, am I in duty bound, in conscience toward God, to inform on him? May not love, the higher law, require me to conceal the crime in hopes of the culprit's reformation? While he cannot, in any proper sense, become a partaker in another's crime,



I do not believe that God's law makes a Christian a public informer against others. He is not a competent witness anyway, as he is forbidden to use any form of oath. But if he is legally called as a witness by any court, it is his duty to show the court all possible submission, to honor its writs, and to present himself as required. If such testimony as he can give is allowed, he is at liberty to tell all he knows. He must obey to the limit of a good conscience. He may be called to sit as a juror. He is disqualified as he cannot be sworn. But could he be a juror if that requirement could be waived? I think not. For while he could decide from the evidence as to the guilt or innocence of the accused (he would do that if he heard the evidence, whether on the jury or not), yet he could not take the responsibility of fixing a penalty. This is a function of government, and so outside of his province. We have the example of Jesus in this matter. We are told in John viii of a woman taken in adultery being brought by the Pharisees to Jesus. They said to him, "Now Moses in the law commanded that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?" Jesus at first appeared to pay no attention to them; but as they continued to urge Him for an

answer He said, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." And again He wrote upon the ground and waited for their awakened consciences to do their work. "And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest." This shows that innocent men only can consistently administer the laws, and enforce their penalties. If this principle were adhered to, the empaneling of juries would be a much more difficult work than it now is. I fear the administration of justice would be entirely clogged. Yet anything else is hypocrisy and sham. When Jesus saw they were all gone, except the guilty woman, he said, "Woman, where are thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?" She replied, "No man, Lord." Jesus replied, "Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more." Christ was the only one of all who had been present who was qualified, by His character, to enforce the law, and He refused to do so. He declares that He had not come to judge the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. To enforce civil law against offenders was no part of His mission, nor is it any part of the work of His people, who represent Him here, and have taken up His work. They

are to imitate His example. Methinks I hear the caviller enquire of Him, "How could government be carried on if everybody did as you do?" This thought would not have worried Him, nor need it worry His people. They are not responsible for the maintenance of those governments which are substituted for Christ's rule. There is no prospect of everyone becoming imitators of Christ, and if they should, there would be no need of these governments. We are not to understand from this account of Christ's conduct toward this offending woman, that He in any sense excused or condoned her sinful conduct. There was no doubt of her guilt, and in that sense everyone condemned her. It is in the sense of inflicting the penalty of the law that no man condemned her, and in this sense alone the Lord did not condemn her. We conclude from Christ's example and from the nature of the case, that Christians have nothing to do with the administration of justice or with the enforcement of the civil law.

In conclusion I will notice an objection that may be urged against the doctrine above advocated. And I think of but one objection founded upon Scripture that seems to have any particular force. In Acts xxi: 39, St. Paul calls himself a

citizen of Tarsus, or rather, "A citizen of no mean city." And so he was by birth, and by the laws of the empire. And so is a man born in America, or the United States, a citizen by birth, and according to the laws of the land, which laws hold him in duty bound to perform all that is required of any other citizen in peace and in war; and so the government is bound to afford him the protection due to the citizen. It is only by swearing allegiance to some other earthly government that he can in law expatriate himself. The Christian cannot throw off the obligations of citizenship imposed upon him by the laws, nor avoid those duties pertaining to citizenship. All that he can do to show that he does not recognize himself as a citizen of an earthly country is voluntarily to divest himself of the rights belonging to him as a citizen. And this Paul generally did, so far as we know, with but one exception, which I will notice hereafter. In the instance in which he calls himself a citizen of Tarsus, he was simply informing the Roman Captain who he was; for the captain supposed him to be an Egyptian who had been guilty of murder and revolt against the government. In another instance, Acts xxii:25, Paul asks the Centurion, when he was being bound with thongs

in preparation for a scourging, if it was lawful to scourge a Roman, uncondemned. They were about to violate their own law and lay themselves liable to punishment, and Paul informs them of the fact. He did not stand upon his rights as a Roman, but simply informed them that they were about to violate their own law. At Philippi (Acts xvi: 37), he takes no advantage of his Roman citizenship to avoid persecution, and makes no mention of it until he and Silas had been beaten openly while uncondemned, and had been imprisoned with their feet in the stocks. All this might have been avoided if they had stood on their rights as Romans. But this they would not do. We know it would have availed them to claim their rights as Roman citizens, for whenever the fact was mentioned, it always produced a marked effect upon the officers of the law. It is not generally understood in what high esteem Roman citizenship was held, nor what honor and privileges it conferred. Rienzi in his address to the degenerate Romans of his day declares that in the days of the empire's glory "to be a Roman was greater than a king." The stripes, the imprisonments, the beatings with rods, the stonings, might most of them, if not all of them, have been avoided by the great Apostle of the

Gentiles, had he demanded his rights as a Roman, but those things, even here, which were gain to him, those he counted loss for Christ. Like his Divine Master, who was not a Roman, he committed his cause to Him that judgeth righteously. I will now speak of the one exceptional case. It is recorded in Acts xxv. Here Paul undoubtedly stood upon his rights as a Roman, when he appealed unto Cæsar. But in this conduct he was evidently moved by the fear of man, which is said to bring a snare. The Roman governor Festus, who wished to curry favor with the Jews, asked Paul if he was willing to go up to Jerusalem to be judged before him. Paul had shortly before succeeded in escaping from the Jews almost by a miracle. He knew that the Jews did not intend to allow his case to come to trial, but if they got him once in their power would assassinate him. About forty persons among them had conspired together and bound themselves by an oath not to eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. He knowing these things, and fearing from Festus' question that he would deliver him up to the Jews, and seeing but one way open to the natural apprehension, on the spur of the

moment took his case out of the hands of that God who had so far protected him, and had promised still to do so, and put his trust in Cæsar. I have no manner of doubt that this was a mistake. Paul was no more infallible than was Peter. Not only is there an appearance of a mistake on the face of it, in that he trusts in an arm of flesh, which is forbidden, but the result confirms this opinion. For after his hearing before King Agrippa (Acts xxvi:32), the decision was "This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cæsar." So Paul, who had long meditated a journey to Rome, went there indeed, but as a prisoner, when he might have gone as a free man, and for three years his labors were confined to his own hired house in Rome, when he might have had the freedom of the city, had he trusted in God alone. It is true that Cæsar liberated him this time, but the next time he came before Cæsar, his case was as hopeless as if he had been in the hands of the Jews. God still had a work for him to do, or it would have been the same, probably, at the first trial. And God could as easily have delivered him out of the hands of the Jews as out of the hands of Nero. Though his hasty error did not deprive him of



the favor of God, he was allowed to suffer its painful consequences, and thus was taught obedience by the things which he suffered.

The example of an Apostle is not sufficient evidence of the righteousness or propriety of an action. They were fallible men; and we are to follow them only as they followed Christ. It is true they were under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and so may we be, but that does not render us, nor did it render them, free from the liability to make mistakes in conduct.

There is no other objection that occurs to me worthy of consideration.

We conclude then that the whole duty of a Christian toward existing civil governments is obedience and subjection. That he has no part in the government of the world, and can consistently assume no responsibility for the present order of things. That he is a stranger, a foreigner on earth, seeking his own country. That his citizenship is in heaven, as the Apostle declares, and that when Christ cometh in His Kingdom and establishes it upon the earth, then He will be a citizen here, and will assist in the administration of the government. In short, Christian citizenship is citizenship in the Heavenly Kingdom.



## THE LOVE OF THE WORLD

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LOVE not the world, neither the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.—I John ii: 15.

THE subject suggested by the passage of Scripture quoted above is one of vast importance to the children of God. Yet it is one seldom adverted to in the preaching of the present day. And should it even be mentioned, the comments made on it are generally misleading and injurious. I must confess that in all my experience I have never heard the subject explained. Though the danger of worldly love is often mentioned, what the world is, which the Christian must not love, is left unexplained. It seems to be taken for granted that it needs no explanation; that everyone is already adequately informed on the subject. But this is far from being true. Yet if we are not to love the world it is highly important that we should know what that thing is which we are not to love. Ignorance here is certainly dangerous. We may be guilty of disobedience and be uncon-

scious of it. It shall be my effort to show clearly what is meant by the prohibition; what constitutes the world, and the things in the world.

It will be seen that the subject is naturally divided into two parts: First. The World. Second. The things that are in the world.

First. I shall endeavor to show first what is *the world* which we are forbidden to love. There are two different Greek words usually translated by the English word "world," "*kosmos*" and "*aiōn*." These are not the only Greek words so translated, but any other is infrequent. The word "*aiōn*" is used where the reference is to time, as the word literally means "a long period of time, an age." Where the present and the future worlds are contrasted, this Greek word is used; meaning the present age or the age to come. I recall one exception to this rule. In Heb. ii:5 is the expression "the world to come." The passage reads, "For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak." Here the Greek word translated "the world to come" is "*oikoumene*," meaning "the habitable earth." But the word translated "world" in the text under consideration is "*kosmos*." Its primitive meaning is "beauty, order, system." Like

many other words, though, it has many tropical or changed meanings, and has a great variety of applications. It is the opposite of "chaos" or "confusion." It means various things in the New Testament. Thus in John iii:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, etc.," it evidently means "mankind," or the whole human race. In John xvii:9, where Jesus' prayer is recorded, he says, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." Here that part of mankind not included in the number which had been given to Christ, is meant. The word is often used in one or the other of these ways. But it is evident this is not the meaning of "world" in the passage we are considering. For God the Father is represented as so loving this "world" as to give His only begotten Son to die for their salvation. And it surely cannot be wrong to love what God loves. God's children not only may, but must, love their fellowmen, not merely their neighbors and friends, but their enemies also.

The love of God in the heart produces unfeigned love toward all men. This, then, is not the world we are forbidden to love. It is not the earth or planet on which we live which we are

forbidden to love, as that is not the "kosmos." The Greek word for the earth is "*gē*," from which "geography," "geology," and such words are derived. Besides Satan is said to be the god of this world, but Jehovah is the God of the whole earth. It is not then, mankind, nor yet the unbelieving part of mankind, nor the earth or globe on which we live that we are forbidden to love. We must look still further for the "world" of the text. Some suppose it to mean money, "filthy lucre," as it is called in Scripture. The love of money is most certainly forbidden, but money is not the "*kosmos*." It belongs to it, no doubt, but is only a small part of it. The world, in the meaning of the text, is a system of things, as the original Greek word signifies. It is a system which God hates, because it is in opposition to His arrangement, and is intended to supplant the Divine order of things on the earth. As Satan, the "adversary of God and man," is said to be the god of this world-system, he is no doubt the author of it. In the Scriptures this fallen archangel is represented as being the seducer of men from their allegiance to God. He successfully assaulted the first human pair in paradise, and alienated them from God. After the fall of man, God gave him a simple form

of government and a religion. It is the work of Satan when man is drawn from allegiance to God, to give him a system of things in the place of God's arrangement for him. Mankind has certain necessities and requirements that must be supplied from some source; and if man will not accept God's plan, he must have some other in its place. The world system is the result, therefore, of apostasy from God. It takes the place of that which God has provided, or would provide if man would consent. It is true that Satan has no power to hold dominion over mankind, except by Divine permission. His power is limited and circumscribed. But inside those limits he has a free hand, and executes his will. In his rage against God and his malice toward man, he seeks to ravage and destroy. The Almighty permits him for a while to triumph that His own wise and beneficent purposes may be accomplished. Satan, in spite of his malice, is but an instrument in God's hands, to secure good ends. And when those ends shall be secured, Satan's power will be overthrown and his liberty be taken away, and we are told he will be confined in a place of punishment prepared for him and his angels. Evil shall not always triumph, though it seems to be so firmly established on the

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earth. This system of evil, originating in human apostasy, and formed in antagonism to the Divine order, is the "world" which we are forbidden to love. I have heretofore spoken of it as a whole; I shall now try to analyze it into its parts. It is intended to be adapted to human needs.

In the first place I will speak of man's need of civil government. Since this matter has been spoken of in the preceding discourse, I will not repeat at length what is there said, but refer the reader to that discourse for information on matters omitted here. God gave man a form of civil government, namely the patriarchal, but man not being satisfied with God's order, instigated by Satan, rebelled against God's plan, and substituted other forms to suit himself. These rebellious governments continue unto the present day. I will speak of one characteristic of the world system, in which it differs from the Divine system all the way through. In God's system we have always unity, in the world system we find diversity. God provided but one form of civil government for the whole human family: the patriarchal, or government by a father. God made the family; man made the state. God "setteth the solitary in families." This one form of government is equally

applicable to all conditions and times; to all stages of culture and civilization. It is the foundation with which no form of government devised by man has been able, entirely, to dispense. And when socialism shall dispense with the family and its government, and shall give to the state that authority which God has given to the father, then anarchy and chaos, the absence of all government, shall quickly follow. Just in proportion as mankind approaches that denial of parental authority, in that proportion do they weaken all government. Under those empires which are represented by God as being the best governments, the authority of the parent was absolute. The father had the power of life and death over his children. As this authority is restricted, parental responsibility is lessened, family government is weakened, respect for all authority is in consequence destroyed, and criminals are multiplied. The weakening of family ties is one of the strongest proofs of present degeneracy, and is a portent of future disaster. Not only is filial piety wanting in children, but wifely submission to the authority of the husband is at a discount, God's order in the family is set at naught, and the direful results of family disintegration will soon be painfully felt. Not only are



God's written statutes being disregarded, but the law of nature written in the instincts of humanity is being set at naught, and I repeat, when God's order in the family shall be completely overthrown, then all human government will become impossible. God's plan is unity. But man, through the instigation of Satan, throwing off God's authority, has invented various forms of government in the world. The first form was an absolute monarchy, a despotism, in which the life and property of the subject was at the disposal of the sovereign. Then afterward was invented an aristocracy, in which a few ruled the many.

The word means a government by the best persons. Many of those governed were slaves. The ancient republics were mostly aristocracies; there was but little power exercised by the common people. There were also republics, as those of Greece and Rome. There were a few pure democracies, but these were necessarily small states. Then we have limited monarchies, monarchies and aristocracies combined, and representative republics like the government of the United States. Some people imagine that God is peculiarly favorable to one form or another, but all of them are equally parts of the Great World system



of apostasy. Satan has an assortment of forms of governments and you can take your choice. If men do not like the existing form, they can change it for another more to their liking. Satan has not the wisdom to devise any one form of government suitable to all times and conditions. So he must provide a variety. As those under his influence are destitute of contentment and soul rest, they must have variety to occupy and amuse them. The restless souls of men full of unholy ambition must be stimulated by hope of preferment, of honors, of the emoluments of office, of stars and garters, of titles of nobility. Under the form of government which God ordained, there was no vain pomp and glory. In the world system, on the other hand, there is everything to stimulate vanity and pride, the love of pomp and the love of power. It is the work of a lifetime to mount, step by step, to the pinnacle of power and honor, and no time is left the devotee to think seriously about any other world. All these things are cunningly devised by Satan to entrap men and hold them in his power. Their eyes are perpetually dazzled by the glittering bauble just beyond their reach, and they are kept striving to grasp it. Is it conceivable that God could be the author of a system

which offers such incentives to worldly ambition and the lust for power? But, it may be asked, is not ambition for worldly honors laudable? In the world system it is, but those things which are highly esteemed among men are abomination in the sight of God. To the spectator they may appear to be something noble or praiseworthy, but to those who are behind the scenes, who are cognizant of the envy, the jealousy, the selfishness, the hatred, the heart burnings, of these aspirants after worldly honors, nothing noble or laudable is seen. It is a selfish squabble in which the noblest instincts of human nature are disregarded or trampled upon. Love and unselfishness and magnanimity are always ennobling; their opposites are debasing and degrading. These offices and honors so eagerly sought after belong to this present evil world, which the child of God cannot love. If any man love these things, if he covet them in any degree, the love of the Father is not in him.

Man has been described as a religious animal. To worship a higher power is natural to him. His Creator is the proper object of his reverence and worship. This was natural to him in his state of innocence and holiness. After the apostasy in Eden he was taught the worship of the true God,

and religious forms and observances were given to him. But when he was seduced from his fidelity to God, some other religion must be furnished him. This took the form of idolatry, which the Apostle Paul declares to be demon worship. I Cor. x: 20, "But I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God." Satan, therefore, under the idolatrous forms of worship, substituted himself or his angels as the objects of the worship of mankind. But he did not set up one false god in the place of the one true God, but gave them a great variety of gods. Each tribe and nation had its own peculiar deities. These they endeavored to exalt above the gods of other nations as being more powerful, and therefore more worthy of adoration. When they were successful in war they gave the praise to their gods. These false gods were represented by images or idols, often under the forms of various animals, and at other times of hideous forms purely imaginary. These idolatrous religions were under the protection of the state and were supported by the government. The priests were persons of the highest importance and had much authority in peace and war. No great undertaking was begun, except under religious sanction.

As countries were conquered, the worship of the gods of the conqueror was introduced into subject nations, and thus idolatrous forms became international. Rome was particularly liberal in this matter. She tolerated all idolatrous forms and cults, though having a state religion of her own. She tolerated even Judaism for a long time, until the Emperor Claudius banished the Jews from Rome. As a result of this toleration the gods became so multiplied that idolatry became burdensome. We are told there were thirty thousand gods in Athens, and the government denounced death against the man who should introduce a new god. This law was invoked against the Apostle Paul when he preached Christ in Athens, and he escaped condemnation by claiming that an altar had already been erected to the God he preached, for he had seen an altar to the unknown God, which had been erected to propitiate any deity which they might have overlooked, and Paul claimed that the God unknown to them was the one he was preaching. Under Satan's arrangement there was no need of any one being godless, as the assortment of deities was so large that he must have been a very hard man to please who could not find one to his taste. Some of these

gods claimed prophetic powers and had oracles, where the future could be unfolded, it was claimed. The oracle of Apollo at Delphi was perhaps the most noted. The priestess would go into a kind of trance or frenzy, somewhat resembling the mesmeric condition of modern spiritualism, pretending to be possessed by the god during the deliverance of the prophecy. These prophecies were delivered in such enigmatic and ambiguous language, that they were capable of more than one interpretation, and could be made to fit the event however matters turned out. The devil may be good at guessing, but he cannot penetrate the future.

When Christianity was introduced, Satan fought its advance with every weapon at his command. For three hundred years the conflict raged and thousands of martyrs sealed their testimony with their blood. At last they triumphed over the great red dragon of pagan idolatry, and Christianity became the recognized religion of the Roman empire. "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." Paganism and idolatry were overthrown and Satan suffered a disastrous defeat. But if he could not destroy Christianity, he could corrupt it, and he began this

work in earnest. I do not mean that he had done nothing in this direction hitherto. But the persecutions which Christians endured tended to thwart his efforts. It was difficult for him to persecute and corrupt at the same time. Though many corruptions had crept in among God's people, the essential spirit of Christianity had been preserved, and a sufficient number had been kept faithful to give them victory over their enemy. Now Satan bent all his energies to corrupt and pervert what he could not overthrow by force. The position of the church was favorable to his designs. Prosperity was more dangerous than adversity to the church of Christ. All those evils which had crept in among them were nurtured and stimulated by the favor of the government, and the power and riches which fell into the possession of the Christians. A disposition to value externals, a tendency to compromise with the world, was soon seen. The Bishops, from being the most bitterly persecuted of all the flock, now became the most highly honored. Pride and avarice, those deadly sins, quickly gained a foothold among them. The love of power, a disposition to lord it over God's heritage, developed. Uncharitableness and bigotry manifested themselves, and set them heresy hunt-

ing. The first creed was soon made, and persecution of their brethren, who differed with them in opinion, was begun. The descent once begun was swift and sure. Dead formalism soon usurped the place of spirituality. A cumbrous and oppressive ecclesiasticism soon took the place of that simple government given by the Master. Strife and division displaced unity and peace. Monasticism was developed as a hope of refuge from this dominant worldliness. The worship of images was sanctioned, and soon the church slid into the corruption and darkness of the Middle Ages. Popery fastened itself upon the church in the Western empire, and that in the Eastern was almost submerged by the inroads of the Moslems. Under the intellectual and religious awakening of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Christendom became divided into many warring sects. The forces tending toward disintegration seemed to have the supremacy, and contention and strife were the order of the day. During the nineteenth century this tendency seems to have spent itself, and the pendulum is swinging in the opposite direction. A pure Christianity has been wholly corrupted, so that scarcely one of its original features remains. The



religious sects of the present day are worldly organizations, fully in harmony with the world system. It is often remarked that the line of demarkation between the church and the world is obliterated. So far as the nominal church is concerned, this is obviously true. The apostate church is in the world, and the world is in the apostate church. The separation between the true church and the world is as complete as it ever was.

It is still true of God's people, that they are not of the world, but chosen out of it. These apostate sects have become guilty of the sin of the Israelites at Sanai. They made a golden calf, in imitation of the Egyptian god Apis, and worshiped it, but called it Jehovah. So the object of worship in these false churches is no more the God of the Bible than the golden calf was Jehovah; yet they also profess to worship Jehovah. They are in full sympathy with the system of evil existing on earth, and are a part of it, and shall perish when the world system perishes. God has but one church and one religion. "There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling."—Eph. iv: 4. These contending sects are many bodies and many spirits. Here we



see again the difference between God's order and the order of Satan. One is unity, the other variety. It may seem severe to make such a charge against organizations so highly esteemed among men, as to ascribe them to satanic influence, but the Scriptures bear me out in the charge. James says, "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work."—James iii: 14–16. That this envying and strife is found not only between these sects, but in them, is a patent fact. But a religion consistent with the existence of these things does not come from God, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. God has but one religion and one church, and he brings men into harmony with that one religion and with that church. Satan, on the other hand, must accommodate his religion to the individual tastes and preferences of his devotees. Hence the necessity of variety; and hence the reason why his ministers defend that variety. Christ was rejected because He could not be made to fit into this system, and His people are rejected for the same reason. He was a stone which the builders rejected, as unfitted

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for their building, as no doubt He was. The poet Watts wrote:—

“The foolish builders, scribe and priest,  
Reject it with disdain.”

They were not foolish for rejecting this stone, as unfitted for their building, but for having a building in which the stone would not fit. So of the builders of to-day. They are not unwise for rejecting God's people as not proper for their building, but in building that which shall be destroyed with the evil world. The church of Jesus Christ will stand forever. The fires of the last day will not reach it. It is the spiritual body of Christ and is not affected by change of dispensations. We receive a kingdom which cannot be moved. We conclude that the popular religion and the churches which fit into the world system belong to this world which we are forbidden to love.

Man is a social being. His Creator declared that it was not good for him to be alone. A state of solitude is not promotive of health of body or sanity of mind. So God gave the first man a companion. These social instincts incline mankind to congregate in communities. They love the society of their fellows. As God is the author of

the gregarious instinct in man, He also has an ideal of human society. When men live up to this ideal they are in God's order. God's ideal of human society is that it is composed of a community of equals. Not, of course, equals in all particulars, but equals in rights and privileges, and equals in station, so that no one is high and another low, no one honorable and another despicable. In God's order there are no social strata, no grades or castes; no classes. Jesus gives the Divine ideal of society in Matt. xxiii: 8, "For one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." And again in Mark x: 42-44, "Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so it shall not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister; and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all." In James i: 9, 10, we read: "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: but the rich in that he is made low." The result at Pentecost shows God's plan of social order. Jews out of many nations were congregated at Jerusalem. They were of various classes and conditions, some rich, some poor, but under the influence of the gospel

they were converted into a community of equals; brethren and sisters in Christ. They so fully realized their community of interests, that the distinctions of mine and thine were forgotten, and no one claimed exclusive ownership in anything. "And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need."—Acts ii: 44, 45. "Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need."—Acts iv: 34, 35. Here we see a society organized and arranged according to God's ideal. In it there was no high, no low, no rich, no poor. It was a Christian socialism, where all were on an equality. Worldly wisdom can find a thousand objections to such a community. Its principles and conduct were contrary to all the dictates of worldly prudence. What a disregard of the future was shown in the sale and distribution of property! What a contempt for worldly possessions! Yet all this was a direct effect of the love of God in the hearts of men, shed abroad

there by the Holy Spirit. Men dream to-day of bringing about such a state of equality by political means. All are to be compelled to surrender the rights of possession, whether willing or unwilling. It is no doubt an ideal state of society, where there is no want, no juxtaposition of vaunting wealth and grinding poverty. Where they that gather much have nothing over, and they that gather little have no lack. But in the present state of mankind full of covetousness and uncharitableness, of love for self and hatred for others, it is wholly an impracticable, utopian dream. But one state of society makes it practicable; and that is where each heart is moved by love to God and love of its neighbor. In the Church of Jesus Christ this state of society exists; and though the possessions of real Christians may not be actually thrown into a common fund, yet each individual member of Christ's body holds his property subject to the demands and necessities of the whole. The apostolic church, the one having true apostolic succession, is the church which possesses the apostolic love of the brethren. All others are but pretenders and frauds. Here is God's ideal of human society, where the man who is ambitious of a high place seeks it by becoming the servant



of all. Here is no room for envy and jealousy; for love of power and preferment, since there are no rich to be envied, nor no poor to be despised. What a blessed society! "A pure believing multitude." What a foretaste of the joys of heaven can be realized in such a community.

In the world system society is organized on quite a different plan. It is composed of classes, of grades, of various strata, from lowest to highest. At the bottom is the "submerged," the criminal class; then the pauper, the tramp, the outcast. Among these is found the common laborer, who lives from hand to mouth; then the mechanic, the artisan, the skilled laborer; then the free-holder and the man of trade, of commerce; then the professional man, etc., etc., until we reach the top of the ladder, the exclusives of what is called the best society. In monarchical countries there are the nobility and those of royal lineage. The object of such a division is to give room for the activity of the unholy passions and propensities of human nature. It cultivates envy and hatred on the one hand, and pride, self-love, and overweening vanity on the other hand. Such society holds up many glittering prizes to be gained by those who seek after them. And as the possession of money is

almost essential to success in society, the scramble after riches is quite universal. Each one is striving to reach the station just above him, and is ready to rise to success built upon the failure of his neighbor. It is amazing what eagerness is shown for recognition in society, and then what ambition to be considered a leader of fashion is manifested. What hopes deferred, what disappointments, what chagrin, what heart-burnings are experienced by these devotees of society and fashion. They are ready to part with everything that should be dear to them in this world and the next, that they may shine for a little brief hour as a society favorite. How artfully is all this contrived to prevent these simple ones from remembering that they have souls. What devilish ingenuity and cunning are manifested in the organization of worldly society! And yet how trifling are the prizes in this lottery! Notwithstanding all this many of these slaves of fashionable society profess to be Christians. They belong to the most fashionable churches. A fashionable church! What a solecism! What a contradiction! How can such persons possibly be imitators of the despised Nazarene, who was an outcast from society!

We must be convinced from what has been said that worldly politics, worldly religion, and worldly society, all harmonize, and form parts of one great whole, the world system of which Satan is the author. There are other wheels in this organism, but enough has been described to enable the wise to recognize it. It is opposed to the God of the Bible. Satan is its god, and it is he whom they worship under various names and forms. He transforms himself in appearance into an angel of light, we are told, and mankind are deceived by him, and imagine that he is God. His attributes and character suit them much better than the attributes of Jehovah. He accommodates himself to their propensities and their lusts. He encourages them in their love of pomp and carnal display; "the vain pomp and glory of this world." He is willing to be the tutelary deity of warring states, filled with hatred and envy of their neighbors. It is to him they pray for success in war, and to him they sing *te deums* when victory perches upon their banners. He is willing to accept costly temples of granite and marble, built by the rich with money wrung from the sweat and toil of the poor. The God of the Bible "dwelleth

not in temples made with hands," nor is He "worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed anything."—Acts xvii: 24, 25. Such a God seems to be almost as much an unknown God here and now as He was in pagan Athens more than eighteen hundred years ago. Satan is worshiped as the goddess of fashion nearly eleven months in the year, and then for forty days his worshipers give themselves up to sham mortifications of the flesh, which self-denial but adds a zest to their enjoyment of fashionable follies when it is over, and they can blossom out in new Easter bonnets. The world system is so obnoxious to God that even friendship for it is declared to be enmity against God. (James iv: 4.) It is this world God's people are chosen out of when they are translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. It hated Christ and it will hate His people. If any man love this world system, the love of the Father is not in him.

Second. Having shown what the world is which Christians are not to love, I shall endeavor to show, second, what are the things that are in the world. The Scripture reads, I John ii: 16, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust

of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." There are three things given here as comprehending all that is in the world: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. They will be considered in the order given in the text.

*First.* The lust of the flesh. This is explained by Mr. Wesley to mean anything which strikes or gratifies the outward senses. The indulgence of these desires tends to make men sensual. It may be proper to state here that the word "lust" is not used in the Scriptures in a bad sense, only, as it usually is at present. Men generally use the word now to mean an evil desire. In the Scriptures it is used to represent any desire whether good or evil. Thus it is said "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." — Gal. v: 17. By the lusts of the flesh, the natural appetites of the body are not meant, as these are of the Father, or, in other words, God gave man these appetites when He created him, and they cannot be evil in themselves. Not one natural appetite or desire is in itself evil. When found in their normal state as God gave them, they are good, pure, and holy. It is true that in man's fallen state, they are seldom or never found

in a normal condition. Sinful indulgence has corrupted the race, and we inherit from our ancestors abnormal and unnatural appetites. Those appetites which God made good, and which are necessary to the perpetuation and preservation of mankind, have been so stimulated and perverted by sin that they become a source of continual temptation to evil. Man should eat to live, while too many rather live to eat. The means becomes the end of life. The notion that a state of celibacy is peculiarly favorable to spirituality, an idea fostered by the Romish church, is a reflection on either the wisdom or goodness of God, who instituted the conjugal relation. It is not true, and is put among the indications of apostasy by the Apostle Paul in I Tim. iv: 3, "Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God has created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth." But while the natural appetites are not unholy and therefore do not belong to the world, and while a temperate and lawful indulgence of those appetites is not incompatible with fidelity to God, the unlawful and excessive indulgence of these appetites is incompatible with holy living. God graciously connected a pleasurable sensation with the gratifi-

cation of the natural appetites, both because He is pleased to give His creatures pleasure on the one hand, and to insure that these necessary matters should not be neglected. For the same reasons excessive abstinence causes inconvenience and pain. But when men pervert the gift of God, and make the pleasures of sense the great aim and end of existence, then they exhibit the lusts of the flesh as spoken of in the text. Gluttony is as great an evil as drunkenness, and probably still more common. It is no doubt the cause of many more deaths, and much more suffering than excessive drinking. It is just as strongly reprobated in God's word, and Christians are as emphatically warned against it. Yet how little is said about it by the moral reformers of the day. No doubt many of those who are so noisy in their condemnation of the drunkard, and in their efforts to reform him, are themselves guilty of as great a sin against God, and as great a crime against their own bodies as is the drunkard himself, in that they indulge in overeating and surfeiting, because of the sensual pleasures experienced. Much of modern cookery is intended to stimulate appetites already too difficult to control, and to tempt their possessors to still greater excesses. Highly seasoned and inor-



dinately rich foods tend to create an appetite for alcoholic stimulants. The rebuke which our Savior administered to Martha, who was anxious to set a good table for His gratification, would well be heeded by her modern imitators. Feasting and revelry gratify the lusts of the flesh and belong to the world which is not of the Father. Drunkenness is also a lust of the flesh, and is so plainly forbidden in the Scriptures, and so generally recognized as an evil, that it is sufficient but to mention it. The desire for intoxicants seems to be almost universal in depraved human nature, so that nearly all nations have invented some means of producing alcoholic drinks. Yet I do not think the appetite is natural, but abnormal and depraved. There are other appetites which are manifestly artificial, such as the desire for tobacco. At first nature revolts at this poison, but after a while the body is taught not only to tolerate it, but, through its depraving effect on the nervous system, it is insistently demanded. This being an artificial and acquired appetite, it evidently is not of the Father, and so must belong to the lusts of the flesh which are of the world. The habit enslaves its victim so that he finds it exceedingly difficult to break his chains. Can it be possible that one of Christ's

free people can be a slave of an unnatural and vicious habit? I cannot believe it. The man who cherishes this filthy habit loves that which belongs to the world, and hence the love of the Father is not in him. Any acquired habit which enthralls its possessor is an evil which is not of the Father, and hence should be mortified and abandoned as not being consistent with fidelity to God.

The sexual appetites and instincts in their normal state as given by the Creator are as proper and innocent as any of the other desires of the body. But, unfortunately, they are seldom found at present in their normal condition. Sinful indulgence through many generations has so changed, stimulated, and distorted them, that incontinence is the rule with few exceptions. Where this passion has not been sinfully indulged, at least the imagination has been polluted, which paves the way for sinful conduct. The present condition of the race, so far as this appetite is concerned, is deplorable. The fashions and customs of the world are arranged to stimulate passions already naturally inflamed, so that he is greatly to be congratulated who continues virtuous throughout his whole life. As this appetite can scarcely be found as it came from God, it is in almost every instance a lust of the

flesh, which is not of the Father. The exceptions are those who have submitted themselves to God, and have received grace and power from Him which enables them to keep under their bodies, with all their appetites and propensities, so that they are under their control, and subject to God's law. In such alone the natural appetites are not the lusts of the flesh which are in the world.

Covetousness is another desire of the flesh. It is not a physical appetite, but belongs to this class of desires. Covetousness is a love of possession or money, which begets a desire to acquire the thing desired. This is the sense in which the word is generally used. In a larger sense, it is a desire to possess that which belongs to another, whatever that may be. This lust is constantly condemned in God's word. The covetous man is said to be an idolater having no inheritance in the Kingdom of God. But covetousness is the motive power of the world system. Take it away and the system would fall to pieces. If every man was content with such things as he hath, the glittering baubles put up as prizes in the world lottery would lose all their value, and no one would strive after them. The existing civilization, called a Christian civilization, is founded on covetousness, and could

and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be named among you, as becometh saints."—Eph. v: 3. "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which some having coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness."—I Tim. v: 10, 11. These fleshly desires for other things choke the Word and make it unfruitful. They are thorns and briars which must be torn out by the roots, that the people of God may have any growth in the graces of the Spirit. They must desire nothing but God, and that His will may be done in earth as in heaven. Unless the eye is thus single, the whole body will be full of darkness instead of light. The importance of being delivered from covetousness cannot be exaggerated. Mr. Wesley has truly said that the only attention paid by professed Christians in general to Christ's injunction against laying up treasure on earth is to break it as soon and as often as they can, and to continue breaking it to the end of life. Such men love the world, and are consequently destitute of the love of God. Christians need to beware of this sin, as it will steal upon them insensibly if they

are not on their guard, and watching against it. Everything about them would incline them to exaggerate the value of earthly things. These things of sense appeal so constantly to us, that unless our eyes are continually fixed upon the things which are not seen, which are eternal, the love of them will fasten upon our hearts. How little is this danger realized! O that you and I may be enabled to trample these things, that is, the desire for them, under our feet; that all our aspirations may be toward God, and all our longings may be for those things that are incorruptible and eternal. May we imitate the example of John Fletcher, who, when King George III. asked him what ecclesiastical preferment he would choose, replied, "I want nothing but more grace." So shall we escape the ruinous effects of concupiscence, and shall stand before the Son of man.

*Second.* The lusts of the eye are next mentioned among the things that are in the world. These desires include all those things which appeal to the imagination through the sense of sight; things beautiful and splendid. It is recognized that natural beauties have no demoralizing effect upon the beholder, but rather the contrary. The beautiful landscape, the towering mountain, the

stupendous cataract, inspire admiration and awe, but do not awaken pride or vanity. But that which is the work of man, which is artificial and not natural, has a quite different effect. Man's effort is to imitate nature, and thus the arts of painting and sculpture originated. Architecture, though not an imitation of nature, is also one of the fine arts, as is also landscape gardening. The productions of artists appeal to the eye, to the imagination, to the love of the beautiful and the sublime. While I recognize the fact that these arts are generally supposed to be valuable as educators, that they tend toward culture and refinement, that they develop the esthetic instincts, and while I know that to condemn them is to fly in the face of Christendom, yet I find them classed by the Apostle among the worldly lusts which are not of the Father, and I unhesitatingly take the same side of the question. To delight in these things does not bring men toward God, but the contrary. These arts originated, and were carried to their highest perfection, among pagans. It is true that the professed Christian church has seized upon these pagan arts to strengthen its power over the minds of men, but the effect has not been increased spirituality, but the contrary. Where-

ever these fine arts are most valued and cherished, there spirituality is most evidently absent. No man of sense would go to the marble palace, called a church, where architects have displayed their highest skill, where the loud-toned organ and the surpliced choir chant God's praises, where fashion and luxury are stamped upon each worshiper, to find those who worship God in spirit and in truth. The religion of Christ is a simple religion, and every thing that detracts from simplicity tends to corrupt it. It is true that these fine arts have little effect upon the common people. They appeal principally to the rich and educated and those having leisure. To collect fine paintings of the old masters, statuary and articles of *vertu*, to display them for the delectation and envy of their friends and acquaintances, affords employment for the rich man of leisure, and keeps him from thinking of serious things. These things are a part of the vain pomp and glory of this world which are foreign to the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. The desire for things new and fine in furniture, equipage, dress, etc., is also a lust of the eye. The desire to live in a fine house, and to own costly furniture, to wear fine and fashionable dress, to put on outward adorning of gold and pearls and costly array, all these belong



to the lust of the eye which are not of the Father. All these desires dwell in the natural heart of man. He loves and values these things, and esteems himself more highly because of them. They appeal to his natural pride and vanity and love of display. The love of these things not only springs from vanity and pride, but they feed and increase those unholy affections. The Christian cannot desire these things; they can add nothing to his happiness and he has no delight in them. Among worldly people, there is a constant rivalry over these matters; each one is desirous of surpassing all the others in the grandeur and beauty of his house, or furniture, or apparel; and nothing so gratifies his vanity as to feel that he excites the envy of his associates. No such a feeling can dwell in the heart of a child of God. He can have no desire to surpass others in appearing grand or fashionable or fine. He obeys the injunction of the Apostle to mind not high things, but to be content with common things. So Dr. Clarke translates the passage and such is the marginal reading of Rom. xii: 16. It would be a shame to him to appear finer or grander than others. Common things are good enough for the man who is the follower and imitator of the lowly Nazarene. He may have things comfortable and con-

venient if the means are provided for these things, but at all events his life is not in such things. He is a pilgrim and sojourner and can rough it, as it is but for a little season. He will find his permanent home after while. The Christian has no desire for adorning his person with fashionable or gay apparel. His feelings agree with the injunctions of the Scripture in this matter. "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price."—I Pet. iii: 3, 4. "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with brodered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works."—I Tim. ii: 9, 10. These gewgaws and trinkets which are so dear to the natural heart, especially the feminine heart, have no attractions for the nature sanctified by grace divine. These are worldly lusts, the lusts of the eye, and where they exist the love of God is undoubtedly absent. It makes no difference though ten thousand worldly-wise men contradict and blas-

pheme, though false prophets gloss over the truth or endeavor to explain it away, or boldly deny it, God's word will be found to be true in the end, and all who controvert it will be found liars. Men who falsely profess to be Christ's ministers will reason from analogy, that because God paints the rainbow upon the storm cloud, and bestuds the heavens with stars, and sprinkles beautiful flowers over the fields and prairies, that therefore women should beautify themselves by every means within their power, by every art and device that human ingenuity can devise, and human vanity suggest. We are very liable to be mistaken in our conclusions drawn from analogy, and it seems to me to be unsafe when our conclusions contradict the plain teachings of Scripture. But what is God's word to such men anyway? It has no more authority with them than an old almanac. They are preaching to supply a demand. They know what people want and will pay for, and they furnish that to them, and verily they have their reward. If we have these desires of the eye, no matter whether we gratify them or not, we are not Christians. We may lack ability to gratify them, or we may be unwilling to do so, but there is no safety while the desires exist in us. I would not be so cruel as to wish to snatch these

idols from those who so ardently love them. It is not worth our while to deny ourselves the gratifications of these longings and stop at that. We would lose all our self-denial. We must have new hearts in which no worldly lusts are found. Then we can sing with Wesley:—

“Let worldly minds the world pursue,  
It has no charms for me;  
Once I admired its trifles too,  
But grace has set me free.”

*Third.* The worldly lust last mentioned as among the things that are in the world is “the pride of life.” This no doubt is a desire for those things which recommend us to the consideration of our fellowmen. It is the desire for a reputation, for the praise of men. It is natural to the fleshly heart to desire recognition, to be noticed, to be esteemed, honored. To be neglected, overlooked, forgotten, is gall and wormwood to self-love. We have no desire to be little and unknown, but the contrary. There is no one thing that stands in the way of the salvation of more persons than the love of the praise of men. To imitate Jesus, who made himself of no reputation, to such is the hardest task of all. But this lust is selfish and ungodly, and must be surrendered when we forsake all that

we have in order to become Christ's disciples. Consider what an insult to God it must be for us to esteem the praise of men above His approval. It is not only insulting to Deity, but it is in the highest degree foolish and unreasonable. How little after all our fellowmen can do for us or against us. But all our interests for time and eternity are in God's hands. Is it not infinitely better to have a good conscience and the approval of God than to have all men speak well of us? The fear of the opinions of men is slavish and cowardly and unworthy of a free agent, who must stand or fall for himself. The desire for the praise of men is therefore a worldly desire and incompatible with the love of the Father. Jesus declares that it is a positive hindrance to faith. "How can ye believe which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?" — John v: 44. The wish to be thought well of by others stands directly in the way of obedience to God. For though it is reputable to be thought religious, it is not reputable to obey God's commandments. The offense of the cross is not yet ceased. There is still scandal and reproach attaching to obedience to God. This reproach men are anxious to avoid.

They do not rejoice to have all manner of evil spoken of them for Christ's sake, but would gladly retain a good reputation among men, notwithstanding Jesus' declaration that those are cursed of whom all men speak well. They do not believe this. They prefer the company of the false prophets, who were spoken well of, than to be associated with the true prophets, who were persecuted. No man can desire the favor of God and the praise of men both at the same time. We must choose one or the other, as we cannot have both, though we may have neither. What efforts are made by worldly men and women to be recognized in society, to be respected and honored by their fellows. What hypocrisies are engendered, what endeavors to appear superior, that they may be thought wiser or more learned or richer or of more consequence, than the facts warrant. What jealousy of equals and envy of superiors are manifested in this struggle for a place in society. From all these miseries the child of God is delivered. No feverish anxiety to be thought respectable disturbs his peace of mind. While he is careful to give no occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully, that the name of Christ be not dishonored, he is otherwise careless of his reputation among men, and evil

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report and good report come alike to him. He expects both in the service of the Master; and the one does not depress, nor the other inflate him. The one important question with him is what will please God; and that being settled, it is a matter of indifference to him, whether others are pleased or displeased. As he does not desire recognition in the world for himself, nor the honor or praise of men, neither does he desire these things for his children. He is too solicitous for their eternal interests to wish them jeopardized by worldly applause or friendship. He knows that "if any man will be the friend of the world, he is the enemy of God," and he desires for his children only that they may be sincere disciples of the despised Christ. So he prays that they may be delivered from the temptations to worldliness. He has no worldly ambitions for them, no wish to see them attain to wealth or fame. The man who takes this stand of opposition to the world, and indifference to its opinions, and contempt for its honors, will find himself greatly helped by the world itself. It will actually become "a friend to grace to help him on to God." For it will become as indifferent to him as he is to it. It will become dead to him when he is dead to the world. The line of separation will become very



distinct and marked. This will be a great help to him and tend to secure his safety. It will assist in answering his prayer:—

“Never let the world break in;  
Fix a mighty gulf between.  
Keep us little and unknown,  
Loved and prized by God alone.”

It is much safer for the Christian to have the world despise him than to have it trying to honor him. Its enmity is much to be preferred to its friendship.

The world, then, is a great system of evil and apostasy from God, established on the earth by Satan, who is its god and lord. It is intended to supply man's wants, political, religious, and social. This system will be overthrown when Jesus comes. Meanwhile His people are chosen out of it, and are forbidden to love it. The things that are in the world are the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. These worldly desires furnish the fuel, so to speak, which keeps the machinery of the system in motion. They take the place of love in the Divine plan. Take love out of God's system and it would come to a standstill and fall to pieces. So the world system

without these lusts would have nothing to keep it going, and must fall by its own weight.

Let us be assured then that if we love this present evil world, if we are in it and of it, if we have any desires after its honors or good opinion, if we have affinity for it or friendship toward it, we are God's enemies and the love of the Father is not in us.

## UNHOLY FELLOWSHIP

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BE YE not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?—II Cor. iv: 14-16.

A LITTLE leaven leaveneth the whole lump.—Gal. v: 9.

IN THAT short creed, called the Apostles' Creed, which is said to be the most ancient of creeds, we are taught to say, "I believe in the communion of saints." This is equivalent to saying "the fellowship of saints," as the two words are synonymous. In fact the Greek word usually translated "fellowship" (*koinōnia*), is in the passage quoted above translated "communion." "And what communion hath light with darkness." The word there translated "fellowship" is "*metochē*," which is a synonym of the other, and may be used interchangeably with it. Fellowship means partnership, comradeship, alliance, association. It exists only among equals. The word may be used to represent that which is inward and spiritual or that which is outward and

formal. In the text quoted above it is used in its spiritual sense, the outward form being called an unequal yoking together (*heterozugountes*). But in Eph. v: 11, it is used in its external sense. "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Spiritual fellowship can exist only among those having the same spirit, otherwise it is impossible. And real fellowship exists only among those who have the Spirit of Christ. Here it is of supernatural and Divine origin, springing from a love of the brethren growing out of the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost given them. Thus the fellowship of saints is supernatural in its origin and heavenly in its nature.

"The fellowship of kindred minds  
Is like to that above."

This union is inevitable among real saints. It is the tie that binds them together in one body. It cannot be produced by any effort of the will, nor by any human invention. It is spontaneous where it exists, and will continue so long as the relation of brethren in Christ continues. It is found only in the Church of Christ, which is a spiritual and Divine organism. Herein is found the weakness and unprofitableness of man-made churches.

They lack this Divine cement to produce peace and unity, and are therefore destitute of the communion of saints. There is no danger of saints having spiritual fellowship with sinners. It is impossible; for "what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?" The danger is in an outward yoking together, which may corrupt the child of God, so that he may be dragged down from his high estate and become earthly minded and sensual again. It is against this danger that God would guard his people, and hence the injunction of the text. I repeat it that I may not be misunderstood, it is not against spiritual fellowship with unbelievers that we are here warned, for that is impossible, and so declared to be; but against an outward yoking together with unsaved persons. Persons professing salvation from sin who are members of fallen churches which they confess to be fallen, will say, "We have no real fellowship for these ungodly people with whom we are associated." But that is the very reason why God forbids you to be yoked up with them, because there is no spiritual fellowship. If there were such fellowship, there could be no danger, but because there is not such fellowship, God forbids the outward yoking. It is hypocrisy in the first place, because it

is an appearance of unity which does not exist. It is a solemn lie on the face of it. It is a public declaration of a falsehood, not so much in words, as in actions which speak louder than words. How can a child of God maintain a good conscience under such conditions? He may declare with his mouth that he has no fellowship for these false professors, but his conduct contradicts his words when he takes sinners by the hand and calls them brethren. It is not complimentary to his Father to acknowledge such as brethren. They do not have the family likeness. Nothing can be commendable or justifiable, or even excusable, which is not honest. When men claiming to be saints conduct themselves in such manner, there must be some other motive than the glory of God; they must be seeking that which is their own instead of the things that are Jesus Christ's. In discussing the question of unholy fellowship, the inquiry will be directed toward outward fellowship, or the unequal yoking of the believer with the unbeliever. The subject will be considered under three heads: the nature of such unequal yoking, the danger of it, and the means of avoiding it.

I. There are various ways in which the believer and unbeliever may be yoked together to

the disadvantage of the former. In fact there are few senses in which they can be fellows or partners to mutual advantage. "Can two walk together except they be agreed?"—Amos iii:3. The motives and aims of saints and sinners are so unlike, so opposite, that harmony is out of the question. The one seeks to do his own will, the other to do the will of God. They can therefore have but little in common. Mr. Wesley in the General Rules of his societies requires all Methodists to help one another in business, forasmuch as the world will love its own, and them only. These injunctions have lost all their force and significance among the people now called Methodists. The first yoking that I will speak of is a partnership in business. It seems to me that a saint and a sinner would be unequally yoked together in a business venture. Unless the Christian had such a preponderance of interest in the partnership as to give him complete control, he would be compelled to be answerable for the conduct of his partner, and we are forbidden to be partaker of other men's sins. Many things are thought to be proper and admissible in business transactions by worldly men, that Christians cannot do with good consciences. The worldly standard of honesty and



probity is quite different from the Gospel standard. So if we suppose that the unbeliever is honest in the accepted sense, still his conduct will not square with the Gospel rule, and so the Christian in partnership with him would be responsible for conduct which he could not justify. Besides, the effect of such association is liable to be demoralizing to him. "Evil communications corrupt good manners." But if the unbelieving partner should not be strictly honest in the worldly sense, the matter is still worse. I might as well steal as to share the profits of another's theft. Competition in business is at the present time so severe, that many men think strict honesty to be impracticable. They would like to be honest if they could afford it. But because others will not be honest, they think they cannot be. They are like the London tradesman who excused himself to Dr. Samuel Johnson for dealing in smuggled goods. You know, sir, said he, that I must live. Dr. Johnson replied that he did not know about that, but he knew that he must die. Many men are so anxious about the means of procuring a livelihood, that they forget that they must die. The Christian feels that whether he lives or dies he must be honest. To him there is no possible excuse for dishonesty or double-dealing. Hence he will avoid

the difficulties which will necessarily arise from partnership with an unbeliever, by keeping out of such unequal yoking. All men are, strictly speaking, unbelievers, who have not saving faith in Christ. A mere profession of Christianity counts for nothing. The truly awakened sinner has much more faith than any worldly professor of Christianity has. A truly awakened person seeking Christ, is, in a qualified sense, a believer, and would be counted with believers rather than with unbelievers.

Another way in which believers and unbelievers may be unequally yoked is in the marriage relation. This is called the conjugal state, which means a state in which two persons are yoked together. In the marriage state a saint and a sinner would indisputably be unequally yoked together. This is more dangerous than mere partnership in business, as the relation of the participants is so much more intimate, and the union so much more difficult to break; in fact it is indissoluble except by death or unfaithfulness to the marriage vows. It would seem that the impropriety and danger of such an unequal union are so apparent that it would not be necessary to do more than to mention the matter to convince anyone of it. There can be so little in common between a soul seeking God and delight-

ing itself in Him, and one who loves the world and desires the things of the world, that there would seem to be no danger of such mesalliance. But observation shows that the danger exists, and that God's people need to be warned against it. If we are faithful to God we will find a sufficient number of foes in our own households, without bringing them in voluntarily and with our eyes open. Reason shows us the inconsistency and danger of unequal marriages, and the Scriptures only emphasize her teachings. In I Cor. vii: 39 we have this instruction, "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord." If the woman is to be married only in the Lord, this rule would certainly apply to the man also. If the marriage state has already been entered into before receiving the Gospel, and the husband or the wife becomes saved while his or her companion does not, this has no effect to weaken the marriage bond. The Apostle Paul holds out hope to the believing husband or wife, that by holy living the unbelieving partner may be won over. At all events he commands, "Let not the wife depart from her husband, nor the husband put away his wife." No doubt much trouble and

suffering ensue from such unequal unions, but it cannot be helped and must be endured. It is the penalty which men pay for not seeking first the Kingdom of God.

There are many other yokings with sinners which might be specified, but it is not perhaps necessary to consume space to do it, and I will come to the matter to which the Apostle has especial reference in the text. There is no doubt the writer of this epistle had particular reference to the unequal yoking of saints and sinners in religious fellowship. It is this which is here espeoially prohibited. In the relations adverted to already, the results are certain to be more or less injurious, and may be fatally so. In this it is sure to be ruinous if persisted in, and in order that no one may misunderstand me, I will repeat that it is not spiritual fellowship between believers and unbelievers which is forbidden, for this is impossible. There can be no spiritual harmony between righteousness and unrighteousness, between light and darkness, between Christ and Belial. But believers may be outwardly yoked with unbelievers in some carnal society or organism, and it is this which is forbidden.

II. It is generally recognized by religious people that some kind of discipline is necessary in a relig-

ious society or church. They consider some sins flagrant enough to justify excommunication. The Papists, while condoning nearly every crime in the catalogue, will exclude men from their communion for heresy and contumacy. The various Protestant sects have some mortal sins also, which they consider as justifying exclusion from their fellowship. It is true that the list of mortal sins is becoming shorter as time passes, and communicants may do with impunity now what formerly would have condemned them; but there is still a semblance of discipline left, and the principle, at least, is not yet discarded. Fifty years ago, card-playing, dancing, horse-racing, and theater-going were considered deadly sins by almost all denominations considered evangelical; but for some reason they appear to have lost their sinfulness and are now practiced without molestation. Ecclesiastical discipline is sadly deteriorated; possibly, because no one is left qualified to cast the first stone. But while the necessity of some disciplinary rules is acknowledged, the real danger of unholy fellowship is not realized, and never has been as it should have been. Men have been disciplined who were likely to scandalize the society, if the sin could not be successfully covered up. But this is not the danger to be guarded

against. It is not the reproach arising from the exposure of sin that is to be dreaded or avoided. Much less harm is done by exposing sin than by concealing it. It is true of a society as of an individual, that "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper." God is always glorified in the exposure of sin, never in concealment. The menace of unholy fellowship is not to the reputation of a Christian society, but to its spiritual life, and the danger is equally great whether the sin is open or secret. The fact that religious societies are chiefly solicitous about their reputation shows them to be ignorant of the real danger of sin among them. Sin is corrupting; and contact with it is dangerous. The Apostle Paul speaks of it as leaven. "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven that ye may be a new lump even as ye are unleavened."—I Cor. v: 6, 7. Leaven always signifies a corrupting principle, as I have shown in the sermon on the Parable of the Leaven in a previous volume. The practice of representing righteousness as being a leaven is misleading and teaches an untruth. If sin is leaven then righteousness cannot be, as they do not produce their effects in the same way. Christ calls the hypocrisy of the Pharisees leaven, and if hypoc-

ris is a leaven, how could honesty and sincerity also be a leaven? The idea is absurd, and it is astonishing that able and learned men should have fallen into such a foolish mistake. It has done a world of harm by obscuring the truth upon this important matter of fellowship. All error is harmful, but some errors are more harmful than others. We should be careful how we make the Holy Spirit teach nonsense by our false interpretations of Scripture. Sin is a spiritual disease and it is propagated in the same way that physical disease is. The one is a type of the other. It is a common metaphor in the Scriptures to represent sin by physical ailments. This is recognized on all hands; in sermons and hymns, and by everyone who teaches upon the subject of religion, who recognizes the existence of sin in the world. Now would anyone be guilty of teaching that health can be propagated in the same way as disease? Yet everyone who teaches that leaven stands for a principle of righteousness as well as for a principle of corruption, teaches that spiritual health and spiritual disease are disseminated in the same manner. This makes the absurdity of their teaching very evident. Scientists claim to have discovered and identified the germs of many diseases, but no one so far has



discovered the germ of good health. In fact they are not so foolish as to be looking for such a microbe. But the theologians have discovered the microbe of spiritual health long ago, and imagine if they can but introduce it into a corrupt and diseased organism, they can with assurance await the entire renovation and purification of it, through the multiplication and action of said microbe. Can any manifestation of folly go beyond this? Health is positive, disease is negative. Health is not contagious, nor communicated from one person to another; diseases of many kinds are thus communicated. Hence the danger of infection. One sinner will destroy much good, just as one diseased person may inoculate a whole community. It might seem at first glance that this ought not to be so; that health ought to be more active and powerful than disease, and more able to reproduce itself. A very strong argument might be constructed on this theory, but one fact will overthrow a thousand arguments. It might seem that if one person afflicted with the smallpox were placed in the company of one hundred healthy people, they being so much in the majority, and being also strong and well, ought to be able to overcome the disease in the one man and cure him. Without experience, peo-

ple might be convinced that such a result would follow, but the hundred healthy persons, discovering the one case of smallpox among them, would pay little heed to such an argument; in fact they would not take time to listen to it, but with marked discourtesy they would leave the lecturer to himself, and "stand not on the order of their going, but go at once." But most people are ready to gulp down theological teachings equally absurd on the subject of fellowship. They have not learned from experience on that subject. "What," they exclaim, "you would not have us believe that one sinner can corrupt a whole society of saints!" How many sick persons are necessary to infect a whole community? The common idea is, that if a society of good people admit a few vicious persons to their fellowship, they will thus save them. Just as reasonably take a few lepers into your families to cure them. The one act is not more contrary to common sense and experience than the other. People never act so foolishly with regard to natural things. When a farmer stores his apples for the winter, he does not leave the decayed fruit with the sound, hoping thus to save it. No, he carefully selects out every apple that shows sign of infection, and uses it at once, or throws it away.

Then in a short time he repeats the process; for well he knows that one bad apple will destroy all those in contact with it. This must be done again and again. On the same principle the Scriptures admonish us to look diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble us and thereby many be defiled. Lest there be any profane person as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. (Heb. xii: 15, 16.) If God's people keep pure and unleavened it will be at the expense of constant vigilance. The danger of spiritual infection is equally as great as the danger of physical infection, and it is brought about by contact or near neighborhood. All sin asks in order to propagate itself is contact with righteousness. In such case good is powerless and evil is active and offensive. Purity has no defense against corruption under such circumstances; it will be overcome. I can have no hope of reforming a band of thieves by joining their ranks and becoming a fellow thief. I put myself on their level and so cannot raise them to my former place. Good can only overcome evil by conflict, not by contact. "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." It is by reproving sin, not

by fellowshiping it, that we may hope to destroy it. Modern science has developed the activity of disease, and the tendency of disease germs to multiply, and the danger of infection. Thus the people are being put more and more on their guard against the menace to the health of the body, but the danger of spiritual infection is seen and felt less and less continually. But the leaven of sin has so thoroughly done its work in the world that there are comparatively few left to be endangered. The lump has become pretty thoroughly leavened. It is for the warning of the few that are left that these lines are written. The real danger of spiritual contact with sin must be easily apparent from what has been already said. The only safety of God's people is in separation from sinners. It is sometimes objected that Christ mingled with sinners, and therefore we may do so safely. We may safely mingle with sinners in the same way the Master did, that is true. But he did not fellowship them. It is said of him in Heb. vii: 26, "For such a highpriest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." Here he is declared to be separate from sinners, and we should be separate in the same sense. We are not to separate

ourselves from sinners in the sense of avoiding them or refusing to help them, of sympathizing with them in their afflictions or seeking to do them good; but only in the sense of companionship and fellowship. It is not the common sinners who ask no fellowship and recognition, who are most dangerous, but the hypocritical professors of Christianity, who ask to be recognized as brethren in Christ, who are most to be feared. Of such the Apostle speaks when he exhorts, "From such turn away." We are not in much danger of fellowshiping those who ask no fellowship, but those who demand it, and feel injured and insulted if it is not granted. They are liberal, and ready to fellowship God's people if it is reciprocated. They would make you feel narrow and selfish if you refuse them. But you and they are not on equal ground. They can lose nothing by the agreement and you will. The compromise is all on one side. It is safe to stand with God's word, however narrow and illiberal it may seem to sinners. To do otherwise is to put our souls in peril.

III. How are we to avoid unholy fellowship, or unequal yoking with unbelievers? The answer is found in the 17th and 18th verses of the chap-

ter in which the text stands: "Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." As has been already explained, family relations cannot be severed, and we must endure the inconvenience of being yoked thus with unbelievers, trusting that God will sweeten those relations by the work of his grace in saving the unbelieving members of our families. Jesus declares that the Gospel shall create division in families, so that a man's foes shall be those of his own household. But we can and must avoid entering into such unequal bonds. In all cases where the relation is not indissoluble there must be a withdrawing from it. Many persons when reached by the Gospel are found in oathbound secret societies. I have nothing to say of such fraternities for worldly men and women. I do not suppose that they are any worse than other institutions of this world. I cannot see or feel the propriety of a crusade against these societies from a worldly standpoint. But they are an unfit place for a child of God, since in them he is unequally yoked with sinners. Remaining in them he is unavoidably made

responsible for other men's sins. He is where God forbids him to be. I have never felt it necessary to insist on such withdrawals, being confident that a mere hint is sufficient for a truly converted man. If a man feels at home in such a fraternity, I am satisfied for him to stay there, being convinced that he would not at the same time feel at home among the people of God. I have no desire to separate men from their proper environment. Let them stay where they belong. I am thoroughly convinced that no true Christian, no, not a truly awakened sinner, can feel in harmony with such surroundings. I think that harm is done by insisting too strenuously on outward relations, and that persons are thus forced into attitudes which they are unable to maintain. If the heart is made right and kept right, other things will soon adjust themselves to it. There are moral reform movements with which the Christian cannot coöperate. In fact there are none with which he can consistently do so; for they attempt to yoke saints and sinners together for reform work. Even the American Bible Society makes money instead of moral character the condition of membership. It is self evident that the children of God and the children of the devil cannot thus coöperate to any good end.



So believers are commanded to come out and be separate. As a Christian is responsible to God for the means placed in his hands, he cannot consistently place his money in any association or corporation where it is out of his control, no matter how convenient or profitable it may seem to be. "Be not partaker of other men's sins; keep thyself pure", is as pertinent advice to each Christian as it was to Timothy. As the religious societies called churches are universally acknowledged to contain hypocrites and sinners, they can be no place for the child of God, as he would inevitably be therein yoked with unbelievers. There was once some effort made, some honest effort, to keep these societies comparatively pure. But such efforts are now generally abandoned as useless and hopeless. Men and women notoriously immoral are fellowshipped on equal terms with the best. A more dangerous place for a Christian than such a society would be difficult to imagine. They are whited sepulchres, fair to some degree without, but within full of iniquity. The popular sects are so fallen that instead of enforcing their rules against sinners, rules made when they were aiming at a pure membership, they are now discussing the propriety of rescinding and repealing their rules requiring

consistent living, as being dead letters and impossible of enforcement.

Could there be any more open confession of the fact that the whole lump has become leavened? It has been said that a civil government that cannot enforce its own mandates is unfit to exist. Weak governments have not yet thought of a way out of the difficulty by repealing all their laws against crime and criminals. It has remained for a fallen church to propose such heroic measures. When there are no laws to break, there will be no lawbreaking. "Where there is no law there is no transgression." As therefore believers in such religious societies must perforce fellowship sinners, God commands them to come out from among them and be separate, and not to touch these unclean persons, and thus avoid contagion. But some one may object that we are straining the language of the Apostle and applying it contrary to his intention: that he meant by these unbelievers, persons who rejected Christianity and were idolaters and pagans. Now while it is easy to prove that these false churches do emphatically reject true Christianity as did the pagans, and that fellowship with them is even more dangerous than with open pagans, I will cut the argument short

by showing that these sects contain idolaters, equally so with the pagans. The Scriptures declare that a covetous man is an idolater. (Eph. v: 5.) Now as these sects are full of covetous persons they are full of idolaters, and so the language of the Apostle clearly applies to them. Again in II Tim. iii: 1-5, the same Apostle gives us a description of false professors in the last days who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof, and he commands true believers to turn away from such. This is clear and unmistakable, and applies particularly to the fallen sects of the present time. It is easy to understand how God's people are to get out of unholy fellowship, by coming out from among unbelievers and refusing to be yoked with them; but how they are to keep in this condition of separateness is quite another question. It is quite easy to keep out of the old associations, but the difficult matter is to avoid forming new associations equally dangerous. A little light and a little resolution will suffice for the one, but it requires much light and great care and watchfulness to avoid the latter. It is a very easy matter to condemn the corrupt churches and sects about us, but quite another matter to avoid making another one which will inevitably become just as corrupt

as those condemned by us. And right here is where most attempts to secure a pure church have failed. In most attempts to secure a pure fellowship, the results have been similar to the efforts to secure good government and pure politics by forming a new political party. Before the party could succeed it must be composed of the same materials as were the corrupt parties it endeavors to supplant, and thus it becomes corrupt also; as taking a man out of one party and putting him into another does him no good, and does not tend toward purity. This is the mistake most religious reformers have made. They have taken pure, or comparatively pure material and put it into a human organism where it could not keep pure; where it could not protect itself. Then men have been given something of their own to build up so that they would be tempted to seek that which is their own, and not that which is Jesus Christ's. In such case their eye could scarcely be kept single and so darkness followed. Men soon learned to identify their cause and Christ's cause, but unfortunately their cause became to them Christ's cause, instead of Christ's cause becoming their cause. As their zeal for the success of their cause exceeded their zeal for God's glory, they became less scrupulous

about the means for advancing their selfish interests, and spiritual decline and moral decadence soon set in. Is this unavoidable? Then is a pure church an iridescent dream. Then when Jesus comes he will find no bride who is a chaste virgin; then the gates of hell shall certainly prevail against Christ's church; then will the little leaven indeed leaven the whole lump, and faith and love shall perish quite. But I am persuaded better things of God's people and things accompanying salvation though I thus write. A pure church can be preserved on the earth. With men it is impossible, but with God all things are possible. But whether a pure church can be preserved or not, it is our bounden duty by every means in our power to endeavor after it. And those ministers of God who sit with folded hands saying, "I knew thee that thou art a hard man taking up that thou laidst not down, and gathering where thou hadst not strewn" will find themselves suffering the fate of the unprofitable servant. One of the fundamental mistakes of the past has been the putting of God's people into a human organism, thus trammeling them by man-made rules and regulations. This not only prevents freedom of action, but provides saints with something of their own to care for, and lays the foundation for sectism and

idolatry. We may be sectarian without a human organism, but we cannot fail to be, with one. The first essential thing to the preservation of a pure fellowship is the recognition of no bond of union except a spiritual one. Any fleshly bond of union, however slight, will prove a snare to the church. We must have nothing to rejoice in nor trust in but Christ Jesus. Having nothing to hold saints together but brotherly love, no common selfish interests, nothing to look after but the glory of God, nothing carnal to take care of nor defend, God's people are free to hear the truth and to obey it. They must have a keen sense of the dangerous nature of sin, and the fatal effects of fellowshiping sinners. One sinner destroyeth much good; a little fire kindleth a great conflagration. Disease germs are minute and insignificant in appearance, yet very potent for evil. So it is with sin admitted and retained. No fear of consequences must deter saints from separating themselves from those who walk disorderly and will not be reprov'd. No considerations of friendship nor ties of blood, nor selfish interests, must prevent faithful dealing with those who fail of the grace of God. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty from unholy fellowship. Moses' conduct at the time the Israelites made the

golden calf seems harsh and cruel, when he commanded those on the Lord's side to take their swords and slay every man his brother, and companion and neighbor. (Exod. xxxii: 27.) This, which was written aforetime, was written for our learning, the Apostle declares. In the Lord's work we know no man after the flesh. The transgressor must be dealt with faithfully, though it be with harshness. The object is to save both ourselves and him. To fellowship one whom we know to be unsaved is as much an injustice to him as a danger to ourselves. We are helping Satan to deceive him or to keep him deceived. We must imitate our Father who is faithful to every soul. We must have wisdom from God to know how to deal with each individual case. We are told, "And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh."—Jude 22, 23. It is the spotted garment, not the sinner we are to hate. In I Cor. v: 9, 11, the Apostle Paul writes, "I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators; yet not altogether with the fornicators of the world, or with the covetous, or extortioners or with idolaters; for then must needs ye go out of the world. But now



I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one, no not to eat." But if saints undertake to put this commandment into practice, they are met with the objection that we are not to judge, lest we be judged. What ignorance of the Scriptures does this objection reveal! Yet even professed Gospel ministers are often guilty of such perversion of Scripture, and such foolish, meaningless, caviling. In the next two verses, 12, 13, we read, "For what have I to do to judge them that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." How can we put away from among ourselves a wicked person without judging? How can saints withdraw themselves from disorderly persons without judging? How can we mark them which cause divisions without judging? The objection is too silly to merit notice, but too common to be passed over; but it seems to me that professed religious teachers who are guilty of such puerility, should be heartily ashamed of themselves. "But," says some one, "Does not Christ say, 'Judge not

that ye be not judged'?" He certainly does, and the Apostle Paul declares that He that is spiritual judgeth all things.

It is the part of wisdom to harmonize Scripture and not to interpret one passage so as to make it contradict a score of others. Does Jesus forbid all judging? If so, then he here forbids what is commanded in many other places. I answer no; Christ does not here forbid all judging; He simply forbids unrighteous judging. He gives us to understand that we will have the same rule of judgment applied to us that we apply to others. If I know anything to be wrong in the conduct of another, I know it would be wrong in my own conduct, and in judging others I lay down the rule by which I must be judged. But every honest man expects the same standard of judgment will be applied to him that he applies to others. It is the judging others while not judging ourselves that Jesus condemns. It is the attempt to pull motes out of others' eyes with beams in our own, that is reprehensible. If we get our own eyes cleared up, then we can innocently pull motes out of the eyes of others, and not lay ourselves open to the charge of hypocrisy. If you do not wish to be judged, do not judge others. If you live in a glass house and

are aware of the fact, do not throw stones. Christians desire to be judged by God and man, and they are commanded to judge others. They are to love the brotherhood, and they must know who they are. They must separate themselves from sinners and must judge others to decide who are sinners. They are particularly to separate themselves from those professing to be their brethren, who are evil doers. These things are too plain to be denied. These people who are so much afraid of judging false professors, are very ready to judge "them who are without." They judge the gambler, the saloon keeper, the drunkard, who does not belong to their church. What wretched hypocrisy! To cover up sin in them who are within, and condemn it in those who are without. The Apostle declares that the sins of those who are without is none of their business: that God judges them. That their business is to judge them that are within. False churches reverse God's order and suffer the consequences. The true church is particularly interested in the purity of the brethren; they attend to their own work, and let God attend to His. They have abundance of work in minding their own affairs. They have nothing to do in reforming the world; they have a greater work to do. The world

will soon pass away with its lusts, but the church of Christ will abide forever. The child of God sings:—

“For her my tears shall fall,  
For her my prayers ascend;  
To her my cares and toils be given  
Till toils and cares shall end.”

A hypocritical church trying to reform the world is a sight to make angels weep and devils laugh and jeer. If each child of God were to stand alone without fellowship for anyone, he could with comparative ease maintain a state of separation from sinners. But Christ has organized his people into a church or family and it must be the constant care of God's people to make the bounds of their fellowship correspond with those of the true church. This can only be done by spiritual men who are declared to be able to discern all things. It is nearly impossible for a base pretender to righteousness to impose himself on a spiritual people. They are made very sensitive to spiritual influences. It is wonderful how even children who have been under the influence of the Holy Spirit will detect an impostor. They are only likely to be imposed upon by those who are self-deceived; who imagine themselves saved when they are not. But faithful dealing will develop such cases. No man can successfully imitate the

Christian character and life who is not a Christian; and if God's people are watchful, such deceived persons will soon be discovered. The church should exercise care in receiving persons to fellowship. Said Paul to Timothy, "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins." This advice will apply to the receiving men into fellowship with the church. If it found that anyone is unworthy of fellowship, he should be plainly dealt with, and the proofs of his unsaved condition pointed out. To withdraw fellowship is an individual matter; no one can do it for another. It cannot be done by majority vote. Hasty judgment may be productive of harm. "Judge nothing before the time, before the Lord come," is the advice of the Apostle to the church. When things can be made clear, and the blessed Spirit leads the way, then let matter be brought out. As everyone is left free, no division is likely to result. If it should, it is only what is liable to follow the entertaining a profane person. But when the Holy Spirit guides, all will result well. "Him that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject," is the direction of the Apostle to the Gentiles. A heretic is one who causes division among brethren, a factious person, and as

this was often done by teaching false doctrines, it has come to be applied to one who holds false tenets or beliefs. But no error in doctrine really makes a man a heretic. It is only when he seeks to cause dissension by any means, that a man becomes a heretic. It is to be expected that in all cases of discipline the church will act together, as all are under the teaching of the same Spirit. It is only through the teachings and leadings of the Holy Spirit that the church can be preserved. Unity in judgment can be secured only through His teachings. The manner of settling personal differences among brethren is clearly set forth by Christ in Mat. xviii: 15, 18. Where there is no human organism all that is necessary is the withdrawal of fellowship each one for himself, or by mutual consent, by the leader for the whole society. Real Christians realize that only those who are God's children are their brethren and sisters. Hence they are careful in the use of the term brother and sister. Most professors are very careless in this regard. It is a common practice to call anyone brother, and it may be done by many such with propriety, it is true. To the true child of God the appellation is sacred and cannot be innocently applied to the children of the devil. It

would be a libel on their Father, and on their Elder Brother, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is intended to be applied only to members of the heavenly family. It represents a relation the most endearing, the most intimate, the most enduring, known on earth or in Heaven.

If men and women will thus come out from among the ungodly and separate themselves from sinners and refuse to touch the unclean, God promises to be their Father, and that they shall be His sons and daughters. As such they are the children of His love in a peculiar sense; their interests are specially dear to Him; he that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of His eye. He will avenge them upon their enemies. He will regard them with a solicitude so tender and true that it is beyond our comprehension. The mother may forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on it, but God cannot forget His people. They are graven on the palms of His hands; the hairs of their heads are all numbered; and God shall supply all their needs according to His riches in glory. May God enable His people to purge themselves from all the vessels of dishonor, that they may be vessels unto honor sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work.



## CHRISTIAN UNITY

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ENDEAVORING to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.—Eph. iv : 3, 4.

NOW I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that ye all speak the same things, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.—I Cor. i : 10.

NEITHER pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one.—John xvii : 20, 21.

THERE are two things of vital importance to the Church of Christ; separation from the world, and union among the membership. The want of either of these conditions portends certain death. Both these requisites of spiritual life are insisted on by the sacred writers and teachers, but how little heed is paid to their exhortations and warnings; and we see the sad and baleful consequences of this indifference. The worst of the situation is that such a degree of judicial blindness is upon the nominal church that she is not aware of her true condition, and she parades her spiritual nakedness without shame, because she imagines herself rich

and increased with goods. This is the lowest degree of degradation to which she can descend. But God has not left himself without witnesses, and for the few who have not defiled their garments the warning voice must still be lifted up; the trumpet must give no uncertain sound, though there be so few to regard it. The commission to teach God's people all He has commanded them has not yet been withdrawn, and the responsibility for the safety of souls still rests upon Christ's ambassadors. The dangers of unholy fellowship have already been considered, and it shall be my task in this discourse to set forth the necessity of unity among God's people. No one is able to deny the fact that Christ requires his people to be one. But many have endeavored to make obscure a matter which could not be denied. They talk much about unity and uniformity: that the one is required while the other is not, and beg the question by assuming that unity exists without uniformity. Just what is meant by uniformity in the mouths of such teachers I do not know, nor do they seem to know with any clearness. I suppose it is nothing dangerous, if it should be spontaneous, and not forced by outside pressure. There is nothing said pro or con in Scripture about uniformity, and there is

room for suspicion that the quibble is introduced to divert attention from the real question under discussion, and to conceal the lack of unity in the nominal church. The Papists insist on unity, and put forth the most strenuous efforts to maintain it; and they taunt the Protestants with their want of it. It is true that papal unity is no better than Protestant division, as it is not Christian unity. But Rome has some kind of unity, while Protestant sects have no kind at all. Thus they are put on the defensive, and are at their wit's end to explain and excuse the situation. They have invented an idea that is supposed to meet the case. They say that while the visible church is divided into sects and rent by schisms, there is an invisible church which is a unit. They can furnish no Scripture proof of such a church, however, and if they could it would not meet the case. Christ prays for unity among his people, that the world may believe that the Father has sent Him. It must be, therefore, a visible unity to convince the world; and an invisible church cannot furnish that kind. The church of Christ is a city set upon a hill, that cannot be hid. So that subterfuge will not do. Men sometimes are found who are brazen and reckless enough to assert that the various sects

of Christendom furnish an example of Christian unity. But no sane man can believe it. Those who assert it certainly cannot believe it themselves. The Apostle Paul declares that when some called themselves for Paul, and some for Apollos, and some for Cephas, that there were divisions among them and they were proven to be carnal. Paul did not discern among these different names the proofs of unity. I suppose that to call ourselves after Wesley, or Calvin, or Luther is just as bad as to call ourselves after the Apostles and just as strong proof of want of unity. The Apostle Paul declares, "There is one body and one Spirit." Are all these contending sects one body, having a common head? We know this is not true. Whatever unity there may be among them, if there be any, it is clear it is not the kind Christ prayed for and which the Apostle urges upon the Corinthians. But it is not necessary to endeavor to prove to the intelligent reader the absence of Christian unity among the denominations of professed Christians of the present day. The fact is self-evident. So I shall proceed to consider what Christian unity is, how it is brought about, and how preserved.

By Christian unity I do not mean denominational unity, or the consolidation of the various

sectarian organisms existing in the world. This is not only impossible, but undesirable. Here is where many would-be reformers have made a mistake. They have shown clearly the evil of division among Christians, and their duty of being united together. But they have directed their efforts toward amalgamating the different sects. They failed to accomplish this work, but finding persons to agree with them, they organized other sects, thus increasing the evil they set forth to destroy. Their intentions may have been good, but their manner of procedure was all wrong. And if they had succeeded in their undertaking, no real good would have been accomplished. It is not ecclesiastical unity, merely, that is needed, but Christian unity; unity of the Spirit. To bring together a great number of unsaved people, along with a few saved ones, into one great ecclesiastical body, would not be what God commands or what our Savior prays for. So for want of wisdom all this labor for unity was entirely lost. I have shown in the previous discourse that the first essential thing is the separation of God's people from sinners. There can be no real unity until that is accomplished. Then God will receive us and adopt us into his family as his children, and we

thus become, all of us, members of one family. The unity is in the family and among the members of the family. We are exhorted to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit. The inference from this is that the unity of the Spirit already exists. We are not urged to bring it about, simply to preserve it. We are told in another place that "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit."—I Cor. xii: 13. Here we see how and when we come into the unity of the Spirit. It is when we become members of the one body by the baptism of the Spirit. We are informed in the preceding verse that as in the physical body there are many members in but one body, so also is Christ. Christ has but one spiritual body composed of members baptized into this body by one Spirit. All who have this baptism are in this one body. None who are without this baptism are in it. This spiritual body of Christ is the church of Christ as stated in Col. i: 18-24. This is the only church spoken of in the New Testament or recognized therein. This church is also called the bride of Christ and the Lamb's wife. Adam declared Eve to be bone of

his bone and flesh of his flesh; and so saints are said to be "Members of his [Christ's] body, his flesh and his bones." — Eph. v: 30. This is the church to which we have reference when we speak of the necessity of unity. In a restricted sense, all the saved people in any community or neighborhood constitute a church of Christ in that place. They are not the church because some man has organized them into a society, but because they have been baptized into one body by the Holy Spirit, and have been filled by the same Spirit. Now it has become their bounden duty to keep the unity of the Spirit which God has created. To this end it is their first duty to come out from among the unsaved, and be separate from them as they are commanded, and then to meet together in the name of Jesus, that the union which the one Spirit has produced may be made manifest to the world. How can this wonderful unity of saints convince the world unless it is plainly seen? Is it not clear that I am hindering Christ's prayer for me and his other children in my vicinity, if I refuse to do all I can to make manifest this unity, which is the standing proof of Christ's divinity and Messiahship? Can I be an obedient child and thus act? How strange that these plain simple



truths should be so ignored and disregarded by men professing to be God's children. The division of nominal Christians into a multiplicity of sects is a fruitful cause of skepticism and infidelity. When a number of professed guides point out each a different road to the same place, each one being confident that he alone is not mistaken, the traveler is bewildered and confused, and is inclined to distrust all of them.

If they all agreed they would have no hesitancy in following their directions. This want of harmony among religious sects has produced distrust and indifference among the people generally, and almost their only hope of making converts and recruiting their ranks, as they are depleted by death, is by taking their children and biasing and prejudicing their minds before they are old enough to judge for themselves concerning such matters. They have little hope of converting adults. The unity of the Spirit as found among real saints is a supernatural unity. It cannot be produced by any natural means. It is just as impossible for men to make a church of Christ in a community, as to create a man from the dust of the earth as God did in the first place. They may make the image of a man, and it may be so true

to nature in appearance as to deceive the eye at first glance, but examination will show it to be inert, cold, lifeless. So men may take the materials at hand and organize a society and call it a church, but it will be as destitute of spiritual life as the statue is of physical life. There will be no spiritual bond of union among the members, no sympathy, no real unity. The foot will not feel injured if the hand is cut off. There will be no more suffering than the marble statue would feel when mutilated. God alone can so temper the body together that the members shall have the same care one for another. In the very beginning God showed what He could do in uniting His people together in the pentecostal church at Jerusalem, and men looked on in astonishment. Nothing like it had ever been seen before. That was Christian unity. Men can unite quite closely those who have common tastes and natural affinity. But God can take the most diverse and heterogeneous materials, and produce among them a union the most vital, the most tender, the most intimate, the most persistent the world has ever known. The high, the low, the rich, the poor, the bond, the free, the learned, the ignorant, the rude, the refined, the pharisee and the publican are brought into a one-

ness of spirit, whose bonds of union are stronger than death. They love one another with pure hearts, fervently. Now the Lord having made this union of hearts, he enjoins it upon his people to keep it. As the body without the spirit is dead, so the church without this unity in brotherly love is dead also. As to divide a body is to kill it, so to divide a church is to kill it. Especially will we kill the body if we divide it from the head. When we lose brotherly love we are divided from Christ our living head. If we love not our brother whom we have seen, how can we love God, whom we have not seen? asks the Apostle John. Unity of the Spirit is vital and must be preserved at all hazards. When God's people realize this, they are armed against the enemy who seeks to divide that he may destroy them. It is Satan's constant effort to produce division and strife among saints. And such are their weaknesses and faults that without their being knit together in love, he would inevitably succeed. But love covereth the multitude of sins or faults. Each child of God has a knowledge of himself. He knows how faulty he is, how much he needs mercy both from God and man. And as he needs to be borne with, so he can bear with others. In him "the quality of mercy is not strained."

A knowledge of God and a knowledge of himself makes him merciful. Then love is not only tender, but it is true. It makes men honest with each other. They use plainness of speech. Love cannot suffer sin upon a brother, it will in anywise reprove him. If the Christian feels that his brother has wronged him, he will go and tell him his fault. This will give an opportunity for explanation, and the probabilities are that everything will be made satisfactory. If this fails the directions are clear as to what should be done further. If instead of going to our brother with our grievance we take others into our confidence, we may be doing him an injustice. He must first have a chance to explain, and the matter will probably drop right there. If we keep the matter shut up in our own bosom, we may be doing him an injury and ourselves also. He has a right to be heard before we pass judgment on him. If it is a matter that we can drop and think no less of him, it is proper to drop it and say nothing about it. But we must not keep hidden fire shut up in our bosom. Saints no doubt will be tempted to envy and jealousy, but love arms them against these mean and despicable sins. They have learned of God to esteem their brethren above themselves, and

so cannot feel injured when others are honored. When one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; and when one is honored, all rejoice with it. "In honor preferring one another." When we are tempted to feel that we are not appreciated, let us go down under the cross remembering, "That not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth." No saint can afford for any cause to be separated from God's people. It is spiritual death to separate ourselves. "These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit."—Jude 19. To be divided from the body of Christ is to be separated from the head of the body, Christ. Men sometimes imagine that they can serve God themselves without affiliating with other Christians, but if God has a people in any locality, no saint can refuse to be in harmony and fellowship with God's people with impunity. He sets at defiance God's will, putting his own will or convenience above brotherly love and God's commandments. "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another."—Rom. xii: 10. "Love the brotherhood."—I Pet. ii: 17. "Let brotherly love continue."—Heb. xiii: 1. "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By

• this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”—John xiii: 34, 35. These and many other Scriptures show the estimation Christ puts upon brotherly love and unity. So long as saints preserve the unity of the Spirit, they are kept in the one body, where nourishment is ministered to them that they may grow thereby. This oneness is shown by their care for one another. What is to the interest of one is to the interest of all. What of earthly substance belongs to one belongs to all. They are “ready to distribute, willing to communicate.” When one sorrows, all sorrow with him; when one rejoices all rejoice with him. When one prospers, all are pleased at it. The members “have the same care one for another.” “Each esteems others rather than himself.” The poet has beautifully described this oneness of Spirit in the church of Christ:—

“Blest be the tie that binds,  
Our hearts in Christian love;  
The fellowship of kindred minds  
Is like to that above.

“Before our Father’s throne,  
We pour our ardent prayers;  
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,  
Our comforts and our cares.

“We share our mutual woes—  
Our mutual burdens bear;  
And often for each other flows  
The sympathizing tear.”

It is true that such oneness in Christ is hard to find. Men may call themselves "United Brethren in Christ," but that does not make them such.

"The different sects who all declare  
Lo here is Christ, and Christ is there —"

fail to prove their claim. They "lack the genuine mark of love," and thus prove to all men that they are not Christ's disciples. They rather illustrate the meaning of James iii: 14-16. "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." But though real brotherly love and unity are uncommon, they have not yet quite perished from the earth. God still has a few witnesses, who are still the salt of the earth, and the light of the world. Like Lot in Sodom they are a conserving force, and God will not pour out His vengeance on the earth, until He takes His despised people away from it.

But Christian unity is not only unity of the Spirit, in the one body. It is also unity of faith and of judgment. This is set forth in the passage from I Corinthians quoted at the beginning of this discourse. While many are willing to accept the



doctrine of spiritual unity among Christians, they pronounce unity of sentiment and speech an impossibility. They declare that men can never be brought to think alike on any subject, the subject of religion being no exception to the general rule. Hence diversity of opinion among Christians they declare to be inevitable, which will naturally be followed by outward separation and division. By such arguments sectarian divisions among professed Christians are justified, and pronounced a good rather than an evil. The only way to prevent these divisions, it is affirmed, is by denial of freedom of conscience and free discussion, and by the pressure of ecclesiastical authority as in the Roman Church. Now the Scriptures do not favor the denial of freedom of inquiry nor of opinion, nor do they favor priestcraft nor oppression. Therefore if unity can be brought about no other way, it must be acknowledged that it is impracticable on spiritual grounds.

Another thing is evident: that religious enthusiasm and zeal do not help the situation, but make it worse; for the greater the religious zeal among professed Christians, the more important will their differences of opinion appear to them to be. So that indifference in religion is more promotive of

unity than enthusiasm would be. But if division is a good thing, I suppose the more we have the better, especially if zeal for religion produces it. There is an increasing tendency toward harmony at the present time, but it is because people care so little for religion that they do not think their differences worth talking about. If their religious zeal were to be greatly stirred up, they would contend for things as essential which now appear trivial, just as their fathers did. The logical conclusion from all this must be, either that division among Christians is a good thing, or zeal for religion is a bad thing; and you can take either horn of the dilemma you choose. But if this view is correct, and these things spoken of above are true, then Christ prayed for an impossibility and the Apostle Paul was a visionary enthusiast who did not know what he was writing about. How absurd for him to require men all to speak the same things, and to be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment. Did he not know that this was impracticable? If he were so ignorant as not to know it, how quickly any theological student of the present day could disabuse his mind. And yet St. Paul was not a fool nor an ignoramus. He was a very learned man,

as well as one of the most talented of men, and a consummate theologian. But there is evidently a disagreement between him and the theologians of the present day, a wide irreconcilable difference. And those who justify and defend division among Christians not only differ with St. Paul, but with other good and wise men. Hear John Wesley: "Would to God that all the party names, and unscriptural phrases and forms, which have divided the Christian world were forgot; and that we might all agree to sit down together as humble, loving disciples, at the feet of our common Master, to hear His word, to imbibe His Spirit, and to transcribe His life in our own!"—Preface to "Notes on the New Testament." We find that as great a man as John Wesley wished for the same thing that St. Paul advised. He did not know that the wish was foolish. But if the constitution of human nature makes such unanimity of mind and heart impossible, then it never can have occurred in the history of the race. But we read in Acts ii:44-46, "And all that believed were together and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men as every man had need. And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from

house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." And again Acts iv: 32, "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul." Here were more than three thousand men and women, who spoke different languages, and were a short time before entire strangers, in most instances, as they were devout Jews gathered from every nation under heaven, who were in some manner brought to such a state of unity, that they were of one heart and one soul. There was perfect oneness among them; no contention, no difference, no strife about words. Says Mr. Wesley, "There was a time when all Christians were of one mind, as well as of one heart; such great grace was upon them all when they were first filled with the Holy Ghost."—"Wesley's Works," I, 341. It is true that this perfect unity did not continue, but whose fault was it? The fact is established that it can be brought about, that it is not an impossible state, as some would have us believe. Here God put to shame the wisdom of the wise, and showed the folly of their teachings. "With men it is impossible, but with God all things are possible." What was once done can be done again. The same causes will produce the same effects. It must be admitted

that purely natural causes will not produce such effects. There must be a direct interposition of Divine agency and power. Men are prone to leave God out of their calculations. Without the immediate working of Divine power, Christian unity is impossible. But so is forgiveness of sin, and holy living, and final perseverance. Without the supernatural agency of God, Christianity is a chimera, "Made of such stuff as dreams are, and as baseless as the fantastic visions of the morning." Christianity is wholly a supernatural religion. It is the wisdom coming from above. Hence Christian unity is no more superhuman than all the remainder of the scheme. A Christianity, all of whose phenomena can be accounted for on natural principles, is a sham and a fraud. It is "earthly, sensual (natural), devilish." Christian unity is not to be accounted for on natural principles any more than any other phenomenon of Christ's religion. That it cannot be accounted for by natural means, is cheerfully admitted. It is impossible that any great number of men should be brought to think and speak alike on any subject, by means of human persuasion and argumentation. What will convince one will not convince another. Men divide in opinion on every possible subject. They cannot draw the same con-

clusion from the same premises. Their powers of reasoning are imperfect; they have various degrees of knowledge of a subject, and they view it from different standpoints. Their conclusions are warped and colored by their prejudices, and their mental temperaments. Some always hope for the best, are optimistic, some always expect the worst, are pessimistic. Thus a thousand things intervene to modify their conclusions; and how can they be expected to speak the same things, and be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment? This is true of all subjects looked at simply from the standpoint of unaided reason. The subject of religion is no exception to the rule. So we see men taking the same book as containing all authoritative teaching on the subject of their religion, extracting therefrom a thousand differing and contradictory doctrines. They differ on every point. They differ among themselves about the being and nature of God, the material and moral nature of man, the nature of Christ, the nature, design, and extent of His atonement; the resurrection of the body; the conditions of salvation through Christ; the Holy Spirit, His nature and office; future rewards and punishments; the constitution, government, and conditions of member-

ship in the Church of Christ; as to outward ordinances, whether there are any, their number, nature, design; how and by whom they may be administered; the proper subjects of them, etc., etc. Confusion and uncertainty are prevalent, and men are becoming more and more indifferent toward a subject about which so little can surely be known. The pagan philosophers found so much confusion, and so many conflicting theories in their teaching about the unknown, that they despaired of finding the truth; so that Pilate, in reply to Jesus' statement that he came to bear witness to the truth, exclaimed derisively, "What is truth?" We have come to about the same point in the end of this age. Men are despairing of finding the truth, and conclude that it does not make much difference what a man believes, so he is sincere in his opinions. But is that true in natural things which are types of the spiritual? If a blind man honestly follows a blind leader, will that keep him out of the ditch? Pilate probably looked upon Jesus as a sort of harmless lunatic, talking so much about the truth, which Pilate knew was unattainable. Christ's followers who profess to have the truth, are looked at by the wise and prudent of this world in much the same way now. Yet, if the



Bible is true, it is possible to have and to know the truth. Jesus declares in John xviii: 31, 32, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." When Christ's disciples all know the truth, they shall all know the same thing; for the truth is one and the same, everywhere, at all times. Jesus declares that he is the truth Himself. "In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." The religion of Christ is not only a true religion, it is *the* true religion. There is no truth out of Christ. He is the embodiment of truth, everything else is a lie. Though we cannot arrive at a knowledge of the truth through the unassisted use of our reasoning powers, we may be Divinely taught. The ancient world by its own wisdom knew not God, and the modern world can do no better. "Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son shall reveal him." As God is known only by revelation, so the truth is known only in the same way. So Jesus advises, "If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God,—and it shall be given him." Jesus says further, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God." Again, under the new covenant it is prom-

ised that "They shall not teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know him from the least to the greatest." And the Apostle John writes to all saints, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." And again, "But the anointing which ye have received from him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it has taught you, ye shall abide in him."—I John ii: 20, 27. Since all God's people are under the same Divine teacher and are by Him taught the truth, which is one, they must all learn the same things. It is through the teaching of the Holy Spirit that unity of faith is to be secured, and in that way alone. If God's people hold to nothing as Christian doctrine except what they are taught of God, rejecting the traditions of the elders and the commandments of men, they not only may be one in faith, but they *must* be, since the Holy Spirit will teach them all the same things. This is the mission of the Blessed Spirit. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth—for he shall receive of mine and shall shew it unto you."—John xvi: 13,

14. "But the comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." "And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."—John xiv: 16, 17, 26. How little do professed Christians now depend upon the teachings of this promised Comforter. They no longer feel the need of being taught. Their creeds are complete and they need to learn nothing more. But if we had a published creed containing all the truth, and nothing but the truth, in theory, we would just as greatly need the Holy Ghost to teach us the truth as men ever did. We cannot learn spiritual truth from books, but from God alone. The man born blind might discourse learnedly and correctly about light and colors, but he could not understand one word of his own lecture until he could see. It is in vain for us to prepare correct theories for posterity. Unless the same Holy Spirit which taught us shall teach them, they will be no better nor wiser for

all our labors in their behalf. But if they learn of God, they will infallibly learn what we have been taught of God. Unity of doctrine is secured in the Church of Christ by the teaching and guidance of the Holy Spirit. If men will imitate the Apostles, who spoke that they did know, and testified that they did see, they would never teach false doctrine. But men professing to be sent of God to teach, preach their own opinions, and the traditions of men, and the natural results follow. The sower should sow the word and nothing else. He should give only what he has received of God. What authority has any man to preach his own opinions or the opinions of other men as God's truth? He is uttering, and giving currency to, spurious coin, and passing it off for genuine. The Apostle Paul is careful to distinguish between his own opinions and God's truth, even upon comparatively trivial matters. Yet modern preachers circulate the base coin of their own imaginings, as the pure coin of the realm, with no qualms of conscience for their counterfeit utterances, and their hearers much prefer this to the truth.

When saints are first brought into the unity of the Spirit, they have not entire unity of faith, as they have not a full understanding of the doctrines of

Christ. In the first years of Christianity Jews and Gentiles were brought into this fellowship, and while each race might differ among themselves in some things, there were greater differences between the two; differences of education and of tradition, which would be likely to produce disputes and wrangling, if maintained in self-will. At the present day men are taught so many theories on the subject of religion, that many prejudices must be surrendered, and many opinions revised or abandoned, before there can be unity of faith. These differences of opinion are found where any number of persons are brought into fellowship through the influence of the Gospel. Thus there is not perfect unity of faith when people are first brought into the unity of the Spirit. No doubt the diversities of opinion are more numerous now than in the first years of Gospel preaching. Yet they may all speak the same things if they speak only what they have been taught of God, and hold other opinions subject to revision as they receive light from God. And this they are instructed to do, and not to judge one another concerning differences which are the result of past education. Thus the Jewish and Gentile converts differed concerning clean and unclean meats. One made no distinction in meats,

while the other could not bring himself to eat what the law of Moses condemned as unclean. Had they loved their own opinions more than they loved their brethren and Christian unity, they would have been rent asunder by their differences of views. They also differed about the keeping of holy days. Somebody was in error, and somebody was in the right; but the question was not vital and need not be made a cause of judgment or condemnation of one another. They could leave the matter in abeyance until more light came from God. So nearly all the questions which divide nominal Christians belong to meats and drinks, or of outward things not of the essence of Christ's religion, for, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Now all Christians, whatever their differences, may be brought to think and see alike and to be perfectly joined together in the same mind and judgment, if they will but keep in God's order, under the guidance of the Comforter. "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;—Till we all come into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." By maintaining

the unity of the Spirit, the unity of the faith may be, and will be, come into; meanwhile speaking the same things, by dwelling upon the things which God has already taught us. "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same things."—Phil. iii: 15, 16. Here is God's order plainly set forth. First. Keep the unity of the Spirit. Second. Mind the things in which you all agree; "mind the same things." Third. Leave it to God to convince and guide those who are ignorant. Fourth. Allow no want of agreement in opinion to decrease your love for your brother. Fifth. Let those who are strong and well instructed bear with the infirmities of those weaker and less well instructed. A genuine Christian is honest and desirous to know the truth. He is teachable, being conscious of his ignorance; and while he dare take no man's dictum in place of the teaching of the Holy Spirit, neither is he stubborn or self-willed. Saints are really in more danger of taking truth at second hand from those in whom they have confidence as teachers sent of God than they are of resisting the Holy Ghost.



So long as the unity of the Spirit is maintained, the Comforter is with God's children to "move and actuate and guide." They will continue to learn of Christ, and to grow up into Him their living head. But if on the contrary, the unity of the Spirit is lost, and divisions and heresies creep in, the Holy Spirit will be grieved, brotherly love will be lost, and nothing further will be learned of God. The work of instruction will end at once, for where envy and strife are there is confusion and every evil work. Carnality takes the place of spirituality, and the same thing takes place in a spiritual sense as occurred at the tower of Babel: there will be such confusion of tongues that they will not understand each other's speech, and so they will be scattered. We see this state of affairs fully exemplified in the condition of Christendom at the present time. There is no unity of Spirit, and consequently there can be no unity of faith. The blessed Spirit will not, yea cannot, teach where there is strife and confusion. So while these contending sects imagine themselves to be ever learning, they are never able to come to the knowledge of the truth, because not under the teaching and guidance of the Spirit. Their worldly wisdom and learning not only cannot bring them

to a knowledge of the truth, but they are a positive hindrance to such knowledge, since God has hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes. It requires a great measure of humility and teachableness resulting from a sense of our own ignorance to enable us to be taught of God. It is only those who become as little children that get into Christ's school of instruction. And they do not become any less teachable nor less sensible of their need of learning, by being taught of God. Any assumption of knowledge stands directly in the way of improvement, and is a proof of ignorance. "If any man thinketh that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know."—I Cor. viii: 2. This is a route to wisdom that is little traveled, but it is the only one by which the goal can be reached. The religionists of the present day have not followed this path, but have divided the truth into fragments, and each sect has been contented with a small fraction, which immediately ceases to be truth when divided, just as a fragment of a dead body is not a man. Thus Christ who is the truth is divided, each party claiming possession of at least the larger part of him, and loudly proclaiming, Lo! here is Christ! But a divided Christ cannot be a living Christ, and can be of no benefit

to sinners. I repeat, the division and want of unity among professed Christians absolutely precludes, not only unity of faith, but also any Divine teaching or guidance. It is only by preserving the unity of the Spirit among believers that spiritual life and growth can be maintained. The Church of Christ is called his spiritual body, and is typified by the natural body, which is by the New Testament writers used as an emblem of the spiritual body. Now we know that to rend a natural body is to destroy life. This is emphatically true of the spiritual. Life is impossible where there is not union. "There is one body and one Spirit." "Is Christ divided?" No! When believers divide they cease to be the body of Christ, and become *caput mortuum*, a dead carcass. If they can be considered in any sense one body, they are the body without the spirit, which is dead, and you might as reasonably expect growth in a corpse as in such a church. I mean spiritual growth. It may grow in a natural sense, in numbers, in influence, in respectability, in wealth, but not in grace and the knowledge of the truth. The manner of spiritual growth is described by St. Paul, using a natural body as a figure, in Eph. iv: 15, 16: "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." But if the body is not fitly joined together there can be no growth expected. In Col. ii: 19, we find the same thought repeated. "And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." Where the body is not knit together, there may be some kind of increase, but not the increase of God. In reading the reports of religious bodies, one cannot but be struck with the absence of all claim for increase in holiness. The increase in numbers is boasted of, the addition to the number of buildings, and the amount of money expended upon them, and their value in dollars and cents, is paraded for admiration, the amounts raised for the various benevolences of the denomination are duly chronicled, but not one word is said about spiritual growth or increase in love. None of these things enumerated are any part of the increase of God. Such growth as God desires to see is not mentioned and not expected. The

means by which growth can be secured are not used, as the people have turned away their ears from the truth spoken in love, and have made choice of fables. They throw away the wheat, though still clinging to the chaff. And there is no remedy for this state of things. No fallen church was ever reformed. "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." But among God's real spiritual people unity may and does exist. The gates of hell have not prevailed against the church founded on the Rock, and the very elect have not been deceived by Satan's miracles. Christ's sheep still hear His voice and follow Him, and refuse to follow strangers. The same love that burned in the hearts of true saints at Pentecost still burns in the hearts of God's chosen few, scattered though they may be, despised as they must be. They keep the unity of the Spirit and are coming more and more into the unity of the faith, to the knowledge of the Son of God. The promised Comforter still abides with the church, still takes of the things of God and shows them to those who being ignorant desire to learn of Him. They find Him to be the Spirit of peace and unity. He saves them from all love of contention and strife. The love of God

shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Spirit enables them to love one another with pure hearts fervently. They bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ. The strong bear with the infirmities of the weak, and they, yea all of them, submit themselves to one another in the fear of God. They comfort the feeble-minded and support the weak. They are interested in one another's spiritual and temporal interests and do not allow any of their number to become a public charge. To do so would be to put to shame all professions of brotherly love. They feel that all mere personal interests must be sacrificed, if necessary, to the maintenance of brotherly love and Christian charity. They think and let think, not wishing to force any theory or dogma down any man's throat. They realize that "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing them that oppose themselves."—II Tim. ii: 24, 25.

"O may my lot be cast with these—  
The least of Jesus' witnesses;  
O that my Lord would count me meet  
To wash his dear disciples' feet.  
After my lowly Lord to go,  
And wait upon His saints below;  
Enjoy the grace to Angels given,  
And serve the royal heirs of heaven."

## SPIRITUAL WORSHIP

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GOD is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.—John iv: 24.

BUT thou when thou prayest, enter into thy closet.—Matt. vi: 6.

THE disposition to worship is instinctive in man; and it is probable that no portion of the race has become so debased as to have entirely lost this inclination. Enlightened reason agrees that the natural impulse is in accordance with itself, and with man's place in, and relation to, the universe of intelligent beings. Worship is the proper attitude of a dependent being, that is, of a creature, toward its Creator, provided the creature has intelligence to perceive the relation. The propriety of worship can be denied only on the hypothesis that man is the product of blind chance, and so owes no gratitude nor service to any superior intelligence. But this view of man's origin is taken by few; the great mass of mankind acknowledging themselves in debt to a higher power for life and all the blessings of life. While the



inclination to worship is good in itself, it has been so perverted by ignorance and sin, that it has degenerated into a variety of harmful and debasing superstitions, and but a comparative few of mankind have such a knowledge of the Creator as to be able to worship Him intelligently and acceptably. To do this, however, must be a matter of supreme importance to creatures whose present and future interests are dependent upon the pleasure of the Creator. To know what will please, and what will displease Him, must be a matter of the greatest weight, and of the deepest solicitude to us. The question asked by the prophet is one that appeals to every thoughtful man: "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"—Micah vi: 6, 7. Immediately after the fall of our first parents, God gave them a system of worship consisting principally of sacrificial offerings of slain beasts, to remind them of their need of a promised Savior. Cain undertaking to approach God without the

shedding of blood was not accepted, as was his younger brother Abel, who offered victims from the flocks; and thus originated the first religious quarrel, which resulted in the first murder. It is probable these sacrifices were accompanied by prayers for pardon and Divine favor. The system of sacrifice was much elaborated under the Mosaic code, but its nature remained the same. The great majority of the race, not liking to retain God in their knowledge, allowed their worship to degenerate into the most debasing and disgusting idolatries. They even offered human sacrifices to appease the wrath of their imaginary and sanguinary deities, whom they had substituted for the only true and living God. Little children were cast alive into the arms of an intensely heated image in the worship of Moloch, while their cries were drowned by the sound of musical instruments. The Israelites were repeatedly warned against these cruel and idolatrous practices. It is even supposed by some commentators that Jephthah offered his only daughter to Jehovah as a burnt offering; but this is no doubt a misconception of the matter, as he could not but have known that such an offering would have been abominable to God. It seems that her father devoted her to perpetual

virginity in fulfillment of his vow, thus dooming his family to extinction, as she was his only child. The true worship of God was not understood even among the chosen people of God, but consisted in outward forms and ceremonies, observances imposed upon men until the time of reformation. No doubt there was some true spiritual worship among those who were of faith, but the public worship was wholly formal and ceremonial. The items of time and place were essential in such worship; and it could not be acceptable unless these points were strictly observed. Thus the question asked of Christ by the Samaritan woman as to the proper place of worship touched upon a vital matter under the law. This was because the worship was carnal and not spiritual. The directions and regulations for such worship can have no bearing upon the worship of God in Spirit and in truth. "The law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." The law was but a shadow of the good things to come. It follows that all worship patterned after the Jewish system must be of the same nature, carnal and not spiritual; and cannot therefore be acceptable to God, who must be worshiped in spirit and in truth. We will find propheticall allusions to true worship in the Old Testament writings, but

for clear and satisfactory instruction on the subject we must come to the New Testament. The answer to the question quoted from Micah gives us an inkling of true worship. "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" But as I have stated above, it is in the teachings of Christ and His Apostles that we must go for definite instructions upon the subject of true, spiritual worship.

Christian worship consists principally of prayer and praise. Some other exercises might be construed as being worship, for instance, fasting; as it is an exercise which has reference to God alone, and is classed with prayer in Christ's teachings, and the same directions are given with reference to its practice. But prayer and praise are the principal exercises in Christian worship. I shall first consider the subject of prayer, and shall endeavor to show what is its nature, and how it is to be practiced.

It might be supposed that little could be said upon this subject that would be instructive, since everybody may be supposed to know what it is to pray. And I may astonish my readers when I

assert that prayer is a very uncommon exercise. It is highly probable that many people never heard a prayer offered, and never prayed themselves. Saying prayers is a very common practice, and a very popular one also; but it differs from praying in its whole nature. But most people confound the two things, supposing them to be the same. Real prayer is the offering up to God, in faith, in the name of Jesus, of those desires which have been inspired within us by the Holy Spirit. Three things then are essential to true prayer: 1st, Desires inspired by the Holy Spirit; 2d, Faith; 3d, That these desires shall be offered in the name of Jesus. These are the only things essential to true prayer, prayer offered in spirit and in truth; but it follows that there can be no real prayer without all these essentials. But in order that the necessity of these factors may not depend for proof upon my unsupported statement, I will give some Scripture quotations bearing upon the subject. And first that prayer must be inspired by the Holy Spirit, or, in other words, have the intercession of the Spirit, I will cite Rom. viii: 26, 27. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groan-

ings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints, according to the will of God." "For through him [Christ] we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."—Eph. ii: 18. "What is it then? I will pray with the Spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also."—I Cor. xiv: 15. That faith is necessary to effectual prayer is most clearly stated. "But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."—Heb. xi: 6. "But let him ask in faith nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven of the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord."—James i: 6, 7. "Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."—Mark xi: 24. That prayer must be offered in the name of Jesus is established in the following passages: "For through him [Christ] we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."—Eph. ii: 18. "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be

full." "At that day ye shall ask in my name."—John xvi: 24–26. "Jesus sayeth unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me."—John xiv: 6.

Before proceeding further with the subject, I will mention some things which hinder prayer, or make it impossible. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."—Psalm lxvi: 18. From this Scripture we learn that any attachment to sin makes prayer impossible. If there is any sin which I am not willing to surrender, it is folly for me to attempt to pray to God. He will not hear me because I am not honest in my approach to Him. What a large portion of mankind are thus shut out from the possibility of praying. How few there are who are willing to give up all sinful courses and practices. How few of those who call Jesus Lord will do the things that He commands. While this is the case, all their pretense of worshipping God is the baldest and most unmitigated hypocrisy. They draw nigh to God with their lips, and honor Him with their tongues, while their hearts are far from Him. Another hindrance to prayer is the want of a forgiving spirit. "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." —Matt. vi: 15.



is only the merciful who can expect mercy. An unforgiving spirit is a very common manifestation of the carnal mind. It seems to be impossible for some persons to forgive an injury, and it is difficult for most unregenerate persons. To indulge malice and resentment toward those who have injured us is almost universal, but it excludes all who are guilty of such conduct from the number of those who can pray. These things being true, it is apparent that comparatively few are left who are competent to pray to God in the Spirit. As we are dependent upon the inspiration and intercession of the Holy Spirit to teach us to pray, and to give us access to the Father, it follows that none of those who deny this agency and personal teaching of the Spirit can come to God in prayer. There are many who take upon themselves the name of Christ who deny any direct teaching or intercession of the Holy Spirit. As there can be no real prayer without these helps, it follows that such people do not and cannot pray. That they do not is manifest from the absence of those open rewards which Christ promises to those who pray. Then there are those professing to be Christians who attempt to approach the Father without doing so in the name of the Son. As no man can come

to the Father but by the Son, it follows that such persons do not pray. It may begin to appear upon what grounds I based the statement made awhile back, that real prayer is an exceptional exercise. Yet I do not see how we can escape this conclusion, if we believe what Jesus and His Apostles teach. If we do not believe what they teach, everything is uncertain, and we know nothing about the subject. We are at sea without rudder or compass. But I believe with Peter, that Jesus has the words of eternal life; that by Him came grace and truth. To stand with Christ may seem to many as being illiberal and narrow, but I am afraid of a liberality that contradicts Christ, and charges Him with ignorance and want of magnanimity.

There is one thing concerning Christian worship which seems to be overlooked; that while much of the worship among nominal Christians is, and long has been, public, that Christ gives us no directions for public worship among His people. Under the law, specific directions were given for the conduct of public worship, but under the Gospel no such directions are given. All of Christ's teachings on the subject are addressed to the individual, and none to the congregation. Worship under the Mosaic code was outward and formal and

adapted to the great congregation, but under the Gospel it is inward and spiritual and it depends for its genuineness upon the state of heart of the individual worshiper. So under the present dispensation, no direction is given for the conduct of public worship. The only exception to this statement that occurs to me is St. Paul's instruction to women concerning the impropriety of praying with uncovered heads. Just the opposite was the case under the former dispensation; all instructions were concerning public congregational worship. It does not follow from this fact that there was no private worship under the law, or that there is no public worship under the Gospel, but it is nevertheless significant as showing what is the general rule that governs the matter of Christian worship. In carnal or formal worship, the essentials are of an outward and ceremonial nature, such as time and place, the attitude of the worshiper, etc. So we find that the Samaritan woman to whom Christ addressed His statement concerning the necessity of spiritual worship, was anxious as to the proper place of worshiping God. "Our Fathers worshiped in this mountain," said she, "but ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." This was a living issue under the law, but Jesus

informs her that it was about to become a dead one; that the place of worship is soon to become a matter of indifference. In spiritual worship, on the contrary, nothing is essential but the attitude of the soul toward God. Time or place, or the attitude of the body, or manner of speech, is a circumstance of no importance whatever.

“Prayer is the soul’s sincere desire,  
Uttered or unexpressed.  
The motion of a hidden fire  
That trembles in the breast.  
Prayer is the burden of a sigh,  
The falling of a tear;  
The upward glancing of an eye,  
When none but God is near.”

The Psalmist says, “Come let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.” All this is appropriate and reverential, but it may all be done in the absence of real worship. We do not worship God when we “crook the pliant hinges of the knee,” but when our wills are prostrate before God. There can be no worship when there is anything contrary to submission to the will Divine in our wills. Under the law there was a place where men ought to worship, under the Gospel there is none such place. All places are alike to the worshiper in spirit and in truth. He has no shrines, no sacred places. Such things

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belong to a carnal religion. According to church history there was no distinctive places for Christian worship during the first century of Christianity. They had no temple nor altars, and were for this reason accused by the pagans of being atheists. No such objections could be urged against modern Christians ; they do not lack for temples and altars. The building of such places is anti-Christian, and belongs either to Judaism or paganism ; but resembles paganism the more closely, since Judaism has but one temple, while nominal Christians, like the pagans, have many temples. That the building of temples is not done in the worship of God is clear from the teachings of the New Testament. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, declares, "Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands."—Acts vii: 48. In the hymn-book of the Methodist Episcopal denomination (No. 859), we read:—

"O Lord of hosts, whose glory fills  
The bounds of the eternal hills,  
And yet vouchsafes, in Christian lands,  
To dwell in temples made with hands."

You will perceive that they do not believe what Stephen said, and expect God to dwell in the houses which they build. We do not read that

God ever accepted of but one man-built temple, the one which Solomon built according to His direction and Jehovah took visible possession of it, dwelling between the cherubim. He has never authorized the building of any other temple, nor does He recognize any other as belonging to Him. The practice of dedicating buildings called churches is foreign to the genius and spirit of Christ's religion. St. Paul declares in that memorable sermon on Mar's Hill, "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing that he giveth to all life, and breath and all things."—Acts xvii: 24, 25. As modern Christians worship a God who dwelleth in man-made temples, and does need things which men can supply, it is evident that they do not worship the Unknown God whom Paul preached to the Athenians. To show that they do suppose that they are worshiping God in the erection of temples, I will quote another stanza of a hymn, (No. 869), of the M. E. collection:—

"O thou, whose own vast temple stands,  
Built over earth and sea,  
Accept the walls which human hands  
Have raised to worship thee!"

Here again we see that these worshipers believe in a God who is worshiped with men's hands as though He needed anything. He is not the living and true God, but a God of their own imagination, as were the gods worshiped in Athens when Paul preached there. The true God dwelleth only in human temples, as He saith, "I will dwell in them and walk in them." His people are "builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Their bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost. The temple at Jerusalem was a type of the glorified church of Christ, as the tabernacle on Mt. Zion was a type of the militant church. Since we have come to the spiritual Zion, the city of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, we have no need of temples or altars. Christians may have need of houses in which to meet for Divine service, but they are synagogues or meeting houses, not temples; yet the temple in Jerusalem is always taken as the type of a meeting house, while it bears no resemblance to it whatever. When a synagogue or meeting-house is built, it is for our own convenience; and it is in no other sense God's home than any other building is. To suppose it to be is superstition pure and simple. God protected His temple in Jerusalem, and only



gave it up to destruction after the Israelites had apostatized. But it is patent to everybody that He does not protect these houses now professedly dedicated to His service, and presented to Him. The lightning, the storm, the tornado, the earthquake is as likely to destroy such buildings as any other. And what a burlesque it is to build a house and give it to God, and then get it insured to protect it, as though God would not take care of His own property. Such people must feel that the Most High has little appreciation of their gift, after they, through much labor and self-sacrifice, have built him a house and presented it to Him, if He does not care enough for it to protect it from destruction, when He is abundantly able to do so. Is not the farce of the whole transaction plainly to be seen? There is no sacredness belonging or attaching to any place in Christianity. Where two or three or more are gathered in the name of Christ, Jesus Himself being present with them, that is a sacred place. His people sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. It is a sacred and heavenly place, because holy and heavenly people are in it. The people sanctify the place, not the place the people. When God's people

depart from the place, it is no longer sacred. When God was manifest in the burning bush, it was holy ground all round about; but when God withdrew, it was holy no longer. So wherever God manifests Himself to His people, the place is for the time being holy; it may be a meeting house or a private dwelling, or a barn, or a stable, or a theatre, it matters not what. It is holy because God is manifestly there; but when the Divine manifestation ceases, the place becomes common again. No priestly blessing, no sprinkling of holy water, no ecclesiastical mummeries, can sanctify any place. Nothing but the manifest presence of God the Holy Spirit can make the change from profane to sacred. And this condition of sanctification can continue only where God continues to remain, or, in other words, where God dwells. He may manifest Himself in a temple made with hands, but He will not dwell there. It is of His people He says, "I will dwell in them." They are builded together for His "habitation," not for an edifice which He may occasionally visit. God's temple is His dwelling place, the place of His abode. All this belief in sacred edifices and consecrated grounds and holy shrines, is therefore

idolatrous superstition, foreign to the pure religion of Jesus Christ. Writes Madame Guyon:—

“To me remains no time nor space ;  
My country is in every place.  
For regions none remote I call,  
Secure of finding God in all.”

To the true Christian all places are alike in the worship of God.

The same is true of times as of places. As the Christian has no special place to pray, so he has no particular time set apart for worship. It can have no importance in spiritual worship, since the essentials of such worship are interior and spiritual. So Jesus gives no instruction as to how often His people should pray, nor do His Apostles. There is not a hint given on the subject. Consequently those who undertake to supply this supposed lack, by instructing Christians when and how often to pray, are teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. And Jesus declares, “But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”—Matt. xv: 9. Since all true worship depends upon the inspiration of the Blessed Spirit, it follows that before we can carry out any prescribed program, we must secure His coöperation. But all attempts so far made to put

the Holy Spirit into leading strings have signally failed. He will not be bound by human rules and regulations. We cannot manage Him, but must consent to His leading us, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." To pray by rule is a very easy way of dispensing with the Holy Spirit entirely. If we know just when we will pray and what for, what need have we for any leading of the Spirit? Neither will the Lord, generally, lead us in a uniform manner, as it naturally tends to formality and dead works. If the Lord were to lead me to do anything the same way repeatedly, I would be in danger of continuing to do the thing that way without being led. Habits are dangerous things in the worship of God, because they lead us to forget to depend upon Divine guidance. Because a certain course of action has been blessed to me to-day, does not prove that it will be a blessing to-morrow. God commanded the Israelites to destroy the brazen serpent which had been such an instrument of salvation to them when bitten by serpents, because they were about to idolize it. So God will have us to abandon to-day what He gave us as a means of good yesterday, lest we attach importance to that which is only an instrument of

spiritual benefit. He wishes to keep our eye fixed upon Himself alone, as the source of all good. He can accomplish the same end in a great variety of ways.

“Deep in unfathomable mines  
Of never-failing skill,  
He treasures up His bright designs,  
And works His sovereign will.”

It must be clear to all, then, that all human rules laid down for the regulation of the worship of Christians, really tend to relieve them of dependence on the teachings and leadings of the Holy Spirit. They are therefore not only unnecessary but dangerous. But some one may suggest that he supposes that a Christian can pray at any time. Are we not commanded to pray without ceasing? No doubt we are commanded, but I do not suppose the Apostle intended that we should understand him as meaning that we should pray continuously, without interruption. He no doubt means what Jesus does when He declares that “Men ought always to pray and not to faint.” But Christ’s illustration of the poor widow beseeching the unjust judge for justice, does not carry out the idea of never-ending prayer. When she got a favorable answer, she quit praying. The Apostle Paul probably means only that we should never

abandon the practice of praying. Prayer in the technical and proper sense cannot be continuous, for then could we do nothing else, but would be condemned to unceasing sleepless vigil. Taking the words in that sense would be to make the Apostle give impracticable and foolish directions destructive of sanity and even of life. Yet there is a qualified sense in which we may be said to pray unceasingly. It is in that attitude of soul which, in full submission to God's will, continually says, "Thy will be done." Yet this is not prayer in the full sense, as there is not necessarily any concurrence of the understanding, and real prayer is with the Spirit and with the understanding also. Some persons fear that if they do not pray by rule, according to a prearranged program of times and seasons, they will cease to pray altogether. While under God's instructions on this subject, early in my Christian experience, I was possessed by this same fear. I will admit that a rule is essential for saying prayers. If we do not have a regular time for saying prayers, we are likely to forget to attend to the matter, and will finally abandon the practice entirely, perhaps. But this is a matter of no consequence, and one which I am not considering here. If all formal making of

prayers were to cease at once the world over, no real harm would be done, and it might be productive of some good. The shock might be a real benefit. I read recently of an insane patient who was struck a violent blow on the head by a fellow patient in the hospital, and when he recovered consciousness, reason had resumed its sway. It would not be advisable to adopt that system of cure generally, however. But will Christians cease to pray if they do not pray by program? Are they in any such danger? I answer that healthy people are in the same danger of ceasing to eat, if they do not eat by rule. To miss one meal is not likely to make a man more inclined to neglect the next one. It is true that the recurring demands for food are tolerably regular in a healthy man, nevertheless he eats, or should eat, because he is hungry, not because the clock strikes a certain hour. To eat without hunger is to invite indigestion. On the same principle Christians pray; because they desire something. "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Our Lord supposes His people to pray because they desire something definite. If they did not have a definite desire they would not, could not pray.



This desire for some good thing, inspired within them by the Holy Spirit, will prompt them to ask for it, just as hunger prompts us to take food. The practice of asking for a multiplicity of things without specially desiring anything, is not prayer and will evoke no answer. In fact, an answer is not expected. If God were to grant people what they ask for when they pretend to pray, they would be overwhelmed with astonishment. We are therefore in no danger of ceasing to pray so long as an indwelling Spirit inspires us with desires for good things our Father wishes to give to us. If we no longer have these spiritual promptings, we have lost the power to pray. We may have natural desires for things which appear to be for our advantage, but we will not be able to pray for these things, though we may ask for them. "Ye ask and receive not because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."—James iv: 3. We always ask amiss unless taught by the Holy Spirit to know what is the will of God. "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will he heareth us; and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."—John v: 14, 15. As we cannot

foreknow when the Spirit within us will move us to pray by inspiring us with desire for some special blessing, so we cannot determine beforehand when we will pray, nor how often; and to follow man-made rules in praying is to ignore the Holy Spirit and His leadings, and thus lay the foundation for dead formalism. Nor can we follow the example of any other person, however much confidence we may have in his spirituality, since we can have no assurance that God will lead us just as He may have led him. But we should keep our ears open to the voice of the Spirit of God within us, that we may not miss the good He would move us to pray for. We are told that we sometimes miss blessings God is willing to bestow, because we fail to ask for them. "Ye receive not because ye ask not," says the Apostle James (iv: 2). We allow ourselves to be too much engrossed with outward things, and thus quench the Spirit. If the Spirit is not grieved, these desires will often become intense, and the intercession of the Spirit will be "with groanings which cannot be uttered." No doubt every Christian has experienced these intense longings, these vehement desires, which language could not adequately express. Such prayers are prevailing, for they will not be denied. They are the fervent effectual

prayers of the righteous man which avail much. Yet it is not necessary in order to prevailing prayer that there should be such intense desire. Some of the most signal answers to prayer I have ever experienced were responses to very simple, momentary, requests. God acts as a Sovereign in these matters and does as pleases Him. We conclude that place and time are of no importance in spiritual worship, and that the Christian must be left free from man-made rules, to follow the leadings of the Holy Spirit.

Among the Jews of Jesus' day three things were principally depended on for a reputation for piety and sanctity; praying, or making prayers, fasting, and almsgiving. The Pharisee who prayed in the temple, according to Christ's statement, boasted of fasting twice in the week. These sectaries also found fault with the Disciples of Christ because they did not imitate their example, evidently considering them lacking in religious zeal. They came to Christ saying, "Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink."—Luke v:33. Matthew says it was the disciples of John who asked the question. But the point is that Jesus' Disciples were not taught to do either of these things, thus

appearing to be comparatively irreligious in the view of their contemporaries. In the Mohammedan religion also these three forms of service are most prominent. Five times a day when the muezzin calls for prayers from his place on the mosque, every faithful moslem falls upon his knees with his face toward Mecca, the holy city, and offers up prayers, no matter where he may be or what he may be doing. The moslem does not fast twice each week, but during the whole of one month each year, during which period he receives no nourishment during the whole day until after the sun goes down. Alms-giving is also practiced as a requirement of his religion. Buddhism, too, the most prevalent religion of the Orient, teaches its devotees to acquire sanctity by the same practices. The Buddhist who wishes to gain a reputation for sainthood, fasts, and otherwise afflicts his body, until he becomes emaciated, and drones his prayers over and over. And though he does not give alms himself, having taken a vow of poverty, he becomes a mendicant, and furnishes other people an opportunity to acquire merit by giving alms to him. These three practices, being the chief sources of merit in other religions, and the chief means for gaining a reputation for piety, the Lord Jesus gives

special directions concerning their observance by his Disciples. And it is clear from what He commands, that He does not intend that the reputation for piety, of His people, should be gained from the practice of these duties. He commands them to let their light so shine before men that they may see their good works; and declares that God no more hides the light of the church than a householder does the light of a candle. He puts His church on high for universal inspection, like a city upon a hill which cannot be hid. But He declares that their righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. It exceeds not so much in its extent as in its nature. It is of a nature wholly superior to theirs. It is not the Christian's righteousness which men see, but the fruits of it. His righteousness is interior and spiritual, and its fruits are such as spring from no other source and are inimitable. In outward righteousness derived from the performance of religious duties and observances, hypocrites and Pharisees can compete with Christians for recognition. These classes can say prayers, give alms, and fast oft, and observers might not be able to detect the difference between them and real saints in the manner of doing these things. By these means God's children

could not be certainly known or distinguished. They are to be recognized therefore by the fruits of the Spirit, which are enumerated by the Apostle Paul in Gal. v: 22, 23: "Now the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." By these holy tempers and dispositions exhibited before men, are Christians to let their light shine, that men may see their good works. But worship is a matter between the soul and God, and is not to be put on exhibition. Therefore our Lord directs concerning prayer, "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." These instructions are sufficiently explicit, so that there need be no misunderstanding of His meaning. Yet it is well for us to distinguish the essential points in these directions, and to understand them in a spiritual rather than a literal sense. The first point is that we should not parade our worship before men's eyes.

Secondly, that we should have no desire to be seen or heard of men when we pray. That these desires for publicity are hypocritical, and vitiate the whole service, since our eye is not single. It follows that any thought concerning spectators or auditors, as to their opinions favorable or unfavorable concerning us or our prayers, will make us like the hypocrites. As it is a very difficult thing for us to pray before others without having our minds distracted by self-conscious thoughts, which will render abortive our attempts to worship in spirit and in truth. The Lord has directed us to do our praying in secret. With our closet door shut, and the gaze of men excluded, our minds may be the more easily concentrated on God. It is not necessary that those for whom we pray should hear us pray. Our Father will give the open answer. We are nowhere taught that others are to be influenced by hearing us pray, much less, that we should seek thus to influence them. God may use the overhearing of a Christian prayer to the good of another, but he cannot thus design it himself without praying to be heard of men. The idea that we must hear a man pray in order to be convinced as to his Christian standing, is therefore both unscriptural and absurd. But though the



Christian is commanded to do his praying in secret, yet we are not to understand that he is necessarily confined to a literal closet. This would be to make a place of prayer essential, which has been shown to be contrary to the nature of real worship. The closet with its door is to be taken figuratively, as representing a spiritual condition. If we were to insist on a literal interpretation, it would involve us in difficulties. What would those do who are poor, like the Master, who had no place of abode? They could never pray because of the lack of a proper place, a closet with a door to be shut. Then again it would be necessary, however great the emergency, to refrain from prayer until the closet was reached. These considerations, with others not necessary to mention, convince us that a literal interpretation of Christ's language is unreasonable and therefore inadmissible. The Christian carries the closet with him continually, and wherever he may be, he can enter it and pray to his Father who seeth in secret. As Charles Wesley has beautifully written:—

“To the desert or the cell  
Let others blindly fly; ·  
In this evil world I dwell,  
Unhurt, unspotted I.  
Here I find a house of prayer,  
To which I inwardly retire;  
Walking unconcerned in care,  
And unconsumed in fire.

“Thou, O Lord, in tender love  
Dost all my burdens bear;  
Lift my heart to things above,  
And fix it ever there.  
Calm on tumult’s wheel I sit,  
Midst busy multitudes alone;  
Sweetly waiting at Thy feet,  
Till all Thy will be done.”

It is not necessary for the Christian to immure himself in a cloister, or to seek a hermit’s cell, in order to find a house of prayer, or to separate himself from the world. Surrounded by multitudes of his fellows, he can be alone with God, shut in from distracting influences in that invisible closet, where the Father can be worshiped in spirit and in truth.

It might seem at first glance that since Christ has commanded His people to pray in secret when they pray, that it would never be allowable to pray where we could be seen or heard. But I think a further consideration of the subject will convince us that this is a mistaken conclusion. It is not the fact that we are seen or heard praying that is reprehensible, but the motive which leads us to seek to be seen or heard. That privacy is the rule in praying among Christians is evident from Christ’s language. But there may be, and are, exceptions to the rule. Christians are sometimes led to pray in public; but they do it in such a

manner as not to violate the prohibition against praying to be seen of men. Through the intercession of the Spirit, their hearts are so drawn out after God as to make them oblivious of, and thoughtless concerning, their surroundings; otherwise their prayers would be hindered and rendered abortive. But to make a show of praying to exhibit our piety, or because it is customary, or expected of us, is to do as the hypocrites do.

Another item of instruction concerning the manner of praying is found in verses seven and eight of the sixth chapter of Matthew, "But when ye pray use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him." This prohibition of vain repetitions may be violated in various ways, to some of which I will advert. First, we may disobey it by always repeating the same form of prayer. It matters not whether this form is written or printed, or whether it is merely memorized. It seems to me that the use of prescribed forms of prayer is a denial of the Holy Spirit, and destructive of true worship. It partakes of the nature of that formal worship which character-

ized the Jewish age, and is utterly opposed to the simplicity of spiritual worship. But it is not necessary that we should have prayer-books in order to have stereotyped forms of prayer. Among those sects who reject printed forms of prayer as papistic, there is much formal repetition. In fact most persons who pray in public fall into such formality, if they do not actually compose a form of prayer and commit it to memory. They learn to pray by hearing others, and copy their expressions, whether they understand the meaning of them or not; and they acquire the habit of repeating the same prayer substantially if not literally on all occasions. So true is this that those who attend prayer-meetings regularly can learn by rote the prayers of their brethren. I know from the experience of my youth, that these things are true. Many of the brethren repeated their prayers word for word on every occasion. They might as well have read them out of a book; and had they used a prayer-book, their prayers would have had the merit of much greater appropriateness and beauty of diction, and they would have been equally as efficacious. Sometimes persons in endeavoring to copy expressions which they had heard another use in prayer, which struck their fancy, and the meaning

of which they did not understand, have failed to quote correctly, and have made ludicrous blunders. Several instances of this kind have come under my own observation. All these cases referred to above certainly belong to the category of "vain repetitions." They are vain or empty; empty of the Spirit, empty of power with God, empty of results, being always unanswered.

Another sense in which we may use vain repetitions is in repeating the same petition again and again, supposing that there is multiplied merit and efficacy in adding to the number of our prayers. In other words, it is the error of supposing that in praying it is quantity that counts. This, our Lord gives us to understand, is not true. Our Father does not need any information as to our wants, nor does He, like the unjust judge, need importunity to make Him willing to grant our request. He moves us to pray for what He wishes to bestow.

"Prayer is appointed to convey  
The blessings God designs to give."

It is not necessary to tease Him to make Him willing to bestow blessings. Such a view dishonors God. If there is call for importunity, it is because we are not sufficiently in earnest to take hold at once upon the promise set before us. If we are

ready to pray, God is ready to give. It may require a struggle on our part to get into the proper attitude for prayer, but when we reach that place, heaven and earth come together. When the Popish priest requires of a penitent a certain number of "Pater Nosters" and "Ave Marias" as a penance for his sins, it seems as though he commanded these vain repetitions simply because Jesus forbids it. It is an illustration of how far men may wander from first principles in religion. When the Buddhist counts his beads to keep record of his prayers, I cannot see how it is any more a heathenish practice than when the Papist does the same thing. The wearing of a rosary to count prayers on, as though they were efficacious in proportion to their numbers, is an antichristian and heathenish superstition. But Protestants are not guiltless on this point. The same superstitious idea prevails among them, though they have not yet carried it to such lengths. They have the same notion of the efficacy of quantity in prayer. The opinion is general, judging from the language used, that a great deal of an inferior quality of praying is equal to a little of a superior quality. It cannot be denied that one prayer offered in the Spirit, with faith, will bring an answer. But it is hoped that

many prayers not thus offered will accomplish the same result. Thus I have often heard the remark made by ministers to professed Christians, "It will take a great deal of praying to bring a revival of religion." Why so? Why may not one prayer do it? We are told that when Peter and John, after being scourged by the Jewish rulers, returned to their brethren and reported what had taken place, that the whole company offered one short prayer, and the entire place where they sat was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. Why should not one prayer suffice to bring such a result now? Why should it be necessary to do a great deal of praying? Is it not an attempt to substitute quantity for quality, supposing that they will at last be heard for their much speaking? The fervent, effectual prayer of the righteous man availeth much; but if one prayer does not avail, no number of the same kind will be more successful. It is like the mathematical process of adding naughts. But some one may here suggest that our Lord had given, in connection with His instructions on the subject of prayer, a form of prayer for our imitation. This is true. But although Matthew places this prayer in connection with this sermon, Luke tells us in chapter xi: 1, that it was



given by request of His Disciples. And though we may learn many things from this form of prayer, it was never intended that we should repeat it, and thus use vain repetitions. John the Baptist had given his disciples a form of prayer, and Christ's Disciples, feeling their ignorance on the subject, asked Christ to do the same for them. We must remember that these Disciples were not yet in possession of an indwelling Spirit to teach them to pray. Christ, at their request, gave them an outline of prayer, since they did not know what they should pray for as they ought. But this was for their special benefit. We are instructed that in our ignorance of what to pray for, we are to depend upon the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and not upon any prescribed form. That this form of prayer was not intended to be used by God's spiritual people is evident from another consideration. It has one fatal defect. Under the Gospel dispensation we are instructed to ask everything in Jesus' name. This was not done until after the atonement was made. It was then that Jesus became our advocate. Just before His betrayal and crucifixion, Jesus said to His Disciples, "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name: ask and receive that your joy may be full."—John xvi: 24.

But in this prayer given them for their guidance before the gift of the Holy Spirit, and consequently before Christ's ascension, they are not instructed to ask in the name of Jesus. But no prayer is now acceptable if not offered in Jesus' name. But though this prayer was not given for our use, as has been said already, much instruction on the subject of prayer may be drawn from it, but I will not take the present opportunity to enlarge upon this point. All forms of prayer memorized and repeated become vain repetitions, and should consequently be avoided. We should neither use them ourselves nor teach them to our children. It requires the same Divine teacher to instruct our children as to instruct us, and He is just as ready to help them as to help us. Many things have very pious appearances that are abhorrent to God. It is often as important for us to avoid the appearance of good as the appearance of evil. We want that which is good, and not that which appears so.

We worship God in praise as well as in prayer; and though the same general principles apply to both, it may be well to consider the subject of praise at some length. There is much less said on this theme than about prayer. In Heb. xiii:

15 we read, "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name." There is much said in the Psalms concerning the praise of God, most of which may apply to the present age. In Psalm 1 : 22 it is written, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth God." There are in general three ways of praising God: by testimony, by ejaculations, and by singing. By telling what the Lord has done for our souls, we give Him praise and bring Him glory. This is the duty and privilege of all God's children. But in order that our testimony should be really to the praise of God, it must be given in the Spirit. We just as much need the Spirit of praise as the Spirit of prayer. Some persons imagine that their duty to God requires them to testify for him on all occasions, and at every opportunity. This is a grave error, and leads to evil consequences. Saints do not always have the Spirit of praise, and consequently cannot always speak to the glory of God. But having mistaken notions as to their duty, they are liable to endeavor to simulate a spirit which they do not really possess. This is very grieving to God, and is likely to lead to self-deception. It is hypocrisy to act in such a way. It is like the sin of Nadab

and Abihu, who offered strange fire before the Lord, and were punished by death for their transgression. We must beware of striving to imitate the work of the Holy Spirit, who alone can inspire true praise in our hearts. In order that our testimony may be to God's praise, all appearance of boasting or of self-complacency must be avoided, that all glory may be given to God, to whom it belongs. It was the Pharisees who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others; and spiritual pride will ever manifest such self-complacency. True piety is always humble and self-depreciating, and is as far as possible removed from a boasting spirit. A mere habit of testimony leads to deadness and barrenness, and though men may endeavor to supply the lack of spiritual life by rant and noise, it will not be to edification. Thus many improprieties and follies are ascribed to the Holy Spirit, which are the result of human effort to conceal, or to supply, His absence. Satan endeavors by every means to cover with reproach, and to bring into contempt, the doctrine of the Spirit's leadings, so that he may keep professed Christians practicing dead works. Saints should carefully guard against giving the devil aid and countenance in this effort.

Ejaculatory praise is supposed to come from an overflowing heart. It is when the fire burns within until the emotions are hard to repress, that the inhabitant of Zion is expected to cry out and shout. Such praise is very effective when it is genuine. It is especially characteristic of emotional natures, and while the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets, it seems quite proper that we should not quench this Spirit of praise. Oriental peoples were given to exaggerated expressions of the emotions of either joy or grief; but there is that in the manifestations of God to the human soul that will stir the most phlegmatic, so that the cup of their joy will overflow. While the fire burns the emotions are liable to boil over. When the Lord, according to His promise, when all the tithes are in, pours out a blessing that there is not room to contain, there must be a running over. This is well. Let saints rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. But let them at the same time see to it that this is spontaneous, not forced. Spontaneity is the soul of praise. When the cup is tipped that it may overflow and it is seen that praise is the result of effort, the one step is taken from the sublime to the ridiculous. Nothing falls more flat than stale praise. It is

obnoxious to God and offensive to men. Yet among religious people praise often degenerates into a habit. This is particularly true among those who are uncommonly religious. They learn to interlard their religious conversation, and sometimes also their ordinary speech, with pious ejaculations and exclamations, such as "Bless the Lord," "Praise Jesus," etc. This has a very religious sound, and is likely to give them a reputation for extraordinary devotedness. Verily, they have their reward. I once heard a man preach, who, when apparently at a loss for anything else to say, would exclaim, "Praise Jesus." He seemed to use the expression for filling a gap, as some story-tellers do a long-drawn "and." It impressed me much as would the conversation of a profane man who interlards his speech with oaths, and it was equally a profanation of the name of the Lord. Let saints beware how they neglect to hallow the name of the Father or of His son Jesus Christ. Real praise is "comely," but this is uncomely.

We may worship God by singing his praises. Yet not all singing is praise; some hymns are prayers. This is the only form of praise concerning which any specific instruction is given. The

Apostle Paul says, "I will sing with the Spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also."—I Cor. xiv: 15. And in another place, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.—Eph. v: 19. And James writes, "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms."—James iv: 13. We gather from these Scriptures that the help of the Holy Spirit is as necessary in the praise of God as in prayer. It is not the music that is the essential thing in Christian praise. If we make melody in our hearts, it is not of so much consequence whether we make melody with our voices or not, though of course vocal melody is no hindrance. God's people cannot praise God by proxy, either through an instrument, or by means of a choir of ungodly persons, paid for their labor or unpaid. I can but agree with Mr. John Wesley that an organ in a congregation of Christian worshipers is unobjectionable, if neither seen nor heard. But where there is no spirit of worship, men may as well fail to worship God through a pipe organ as any other way. The organ, at all events, cannot lie to God, which the congregation might do,



if they attempted to do the worshipping themselves. The essential thing is the spirit of praise, which is wrought in us by the Holy Spirit, who dwells in all the saints. Those things which are generally considered accessories to worship are mostly hindrances. In the primitive church it is said that it was a common practice for the singer to improvise his song as he sang it, and the tune also; and thus he was enabled to sing his own sentiments. This practice long ago went out of use, and we sing the sentiments and language of others. But to sing with the Spirit, we must make the sentiments of the hymn our own. They must therefore be appropriate to the occasion and to the spiritual state of the singer. There are many songs and hymns among which we may choose, yet sometimes we can find none that will adequately express our feelings, desires, and aspirations. There are some persons who will sing nothing but some version of the Psalms of David, considering them to be the only inspired lyrics. But some of the hymns of Watts and Wesley and others seem to be truly inspired by the Holy Spirit, and they appeal with great force to spiritual minds. Charles Wesley's hymns, in particular, seem instinct with

holy rapture, and they carry the singer on wings of faith and love quite to the gates of heaven. These old hymns are full of the very marrow of the Gospel, and will be cherished by the spiritually minded so long as the language endures. One of the significant signs of spiritual declension is the neglect of these hymns so prevalent at the present time, and the choice of light and frothy productions, containing little sense and less experience, but full of jingle, which appeals to the carnal taste. There is little spiritual food in these songs, for real saints. Christians, especially such as have a natural taste for music, need to be constantly on their guard against the charms of music, that their natural enjoyment of harmony may not take the place of spiritual worship. It is imagined that the deep solemn tones of the pipe organ naturally dispose the hearers to the worship of God. This is a grave mistake. Instrumental music appeals to the imagination and the natural sentiments, and though it may move us deeply, it does not move us toward God. Its effects are purely natural, and not in any degree supernatural or spiritual. So God's people should be careful not to confound these natural emotions with spiritual rapture, and

not to substitute the one for the other. Charles Wesley has appropriately expressed this danger in a stanza of one of his hymns:—

“Still let us on our guard be found,  
And watch against the power of sound  
With ceaseless jealousy,  
Lest, haply, sense should damp our zeal  
And music’s charms bewitch, and steal  
Our hearts away from Thee.”

There is nothing that more powerfully appeals to the human heart than singing done in the Spirit. It is therefore not only a delightful mode of worshipping God, but a powerful adjunct to Gospel work. But when it lacks the power of the Spirit, it is but sounding brass and tinkling cymbal; and though the melody may be entertaining and the harmony perfect, no effect will be produced upon the hearts of the hearers. Their artistic tastes may be gratified, and pleasure afforded, but their consciences will remain unawakened and their moral natures untouched. Too little attention, even among spiritual people, is given to this subject. It is too often the case that singing is used to pass the time, or to gratify the ear.

Since the Father is seeking spiritual worshipers and none others are acceptable to him, how important that we should learn this lesson. Carnal worship abounds. The number of those who give

him lip service while their hearts go after their covetousness, is multiplied. Costly temples, consecrated fanes lift their pointed spires to heaven on every hand. Sweet-toned bells awaken the echoes, frequently calling men to the worship of God. But how few are found who are of a humble and of a contrite spirit, and tremble at God's word. But to only such will He look, to no others will response be given.

“Vainly we offer each ample oblation,  
Vainly with gifts would His favor secure;  
Richer by far is the heart's adoration,  
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.”

May the Lord graciously teach His people how to worship Him in spirit and in truth.

## CONVERSION

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EXCEPT ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.—Matt. xviii: 3.

THE term “conversion” is popularly used to express the change which takes place in men when they become the children of God. It is, however, used very indefinitely, different persons meaning different things in the use of the word; so that when you hear it said that some person is converted, you do not know just what sense the speaker attaches to the expression. Nor is the term used with precision in the Scriptures. It sometimes seems to refer to the work of repentance, and at other times may refer to the experience of the new birth; in other places it may be understood as including both. The original Greek word signifies to turn, turn about, or to change. The verb is commonly used in the middle voice, in which the actor acts upon himself, and may be translated, “turn yourselves.” In the text of Scrip-

ture quoted above, it seemed to refer to the work of regeneration, which is necessary to admit us into the kingdom of heaven. By the expression, "kingdom of heaven" is meant the Gospel church. The Apostles were anxious as to who should have the highest place in that kingdom which Christ came to set up, and which was declared to be at hand; and it is the necessary qualifications for admission into this kingdom that Jesus here promulgates. Now our opinions may differ as to what constitutes true conversion, or as to the essential prerequisites to membership in Christ's kingdom; but if we can ascertain what Christ teaches upon the subject, all controversy should be set at rest. Our opinions are often the result of tradition and false teaching. Hence if we can lay them aside for the time, and institute an inquiry into the teachings of the Scriptures, we may arrive at the truth concerning the matter.

I shall consider the subject under four heads. *First*, The persons to whom the language was addressed. *Second*, The experiences of which they were already possessed. *Third*, The evidences they gave of a need of conversion. *Fourth*, The time when they were converted and the nature of that change.

I. The context shows that the language was addressed to the Disciples or Apostles. "At that time came the Disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"—Matt. xviii: 1. We learn from other Scriptures that there was quite a controversy among the twelve on this question. In Mark ix: 33, 34, it is recorded: "And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? But they held their peace; for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest." In Luke xxii: 24, we are told, "And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest." As they could not decide the matter among themselves, they referred the case to Jesus. There was probably too many candidates among them for the first place to make the decision easy. As Dr. Adam Clarke suggests in his commentary, this ought to dispose of the claim that Peter was the prince of the Apostles. His fellow Apostles seem to have been ignorant of any such primacy on his part. It is to these chosen Apostles that Jesus says, "Except ye be converted, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." They are probably as yet ignorant of their unfitness for the



heavenly kingdom. They had not yet learned to know themselves. They did not yet know the truth and were not yet made free. Jesus said to those who believed on Him as He taught, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."—John viii: 31, 32. The general impression is that the Apostles were converted men while they were enjoying the company of their Lord and Master. In some sense that may be true, but not in the proper New Testament sense. Evidently not in the sense in which Jesus uses the term. He plainly tells them to the contrary. And just before His crucifixion He gives Simon Peter to understand that he was yet unconverted, since He said to him, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."—Luke xxii: 32. I do not understand how we can ignore these plain statements of Scripture, whatever our preconceived notions may be. It follows that all analogies for Christian experience and conduct drawn from the experience and conduct of the Apostles during this stage of their history will prove to be misleading. The cases are not parallel. Men sometimes excuse unholy fellowship by declaring that there was one devil among the twelve Apostles. They assume that he was a devil, or

adversary, when Christ chose him, which is not true; and they forget to consider the fact that he was sifted out before the gift of the Holy Spirit. Because Peter denied his Lord with oaths is no excuse for us, as he was then yet unconverted. Because all the Apostles played the coward and forsook their Lord in time of danger is no example for us; as they were yet unconverted, and afraid to die. They still feared them that kill the body. We can find no excuse or apology for our sins in the conduct of these unconverted men, nor in the conduct of any of the Old Testament believers, who, in the same sense, were unconverted.

II. I will inquire, in the next place, as to the spiritual condition and experience of these Apostles who were yet unconverted. And this is done that we may measure ourselves by them, to see whether our spiritual state is superior to theirs. In the fact that they were Christ's chosen Apostles, we find nothing significant to us, as we cannot be Apostles. The number was filled in the beginning. When Judas by transgression fell from his apostleship, his place was filled; not by the man-made Matthias, but by Saul of Tarsus, the converted persecutor, who labored more than all the others,

and was the most potent instrument for the spread of the Gospel which the first century of this era produced. But laying aside this particular office which was peculiar to them, I will direct your minds to other experiences which may be commonly enjoyed. And first they had accepted Christ as the Messiah sent by God; and so receiving Him, they had recognized the mission of John the Baptist, His harbinger, and had submitted to the requirements of his teachings. We learn from the record that some of Christ's Apostles were disciples of John, and have reason to believe that all of them were; since Jesus declares that to refuse John's baptism was to reject the counsel of God against themselves; and it is scarcely supposable that Christ would choose such for His intimate friends and followers. But it matters not so far as the argument is concerned, as they were all alike unconverted. Now we are plainly informed what John taught and promised those who submitted to his requirements. He demanded repentance in the first place, and fruits in the life which proved that repentance genuine. When the tax gatherers, or collectors of the tribute, asked him what fruits of repentance were expected of them, he replied, "Exact no more than is appointed you." At the

present day tax collectors, if dishonest, are likely to collect less, rather than more than is required by law. They compound and divide with the taxpayer. But the Roman government, which collected this tribute, farmed out the revenues. That is, some person would agree to pay into the imperial treasury a certain amount as the revenue of a certain province, and take all the risk and be at all the expense of collection. What they collected above this was clear gain. They divided the province out in small sections to others; and those collectors were unscrupulous and oppressive, endeavoring to get all they could out of the property owners. To these John gave the admonition quoted above. The soldiers asked what they should do, and were told to do violence to no man and to be content with their wages. If we take the Baptist's language without qualification, the advice would spoil them for soldiers, as it is the soldier's special business to do violence to his fellowman. The Pharisees and Sadducees who failed to bring forth fruits meet for repentance were rejected. It seems that they desired private baptism, fearing that a public confession of sin would hurt their religious reputations. While the Baptist required sincere repentance, it is not probable that the repentance

of his disciples was so deep and universal as under the Gospel. No doubt there was an influence of the Spirit in their understandings and consciences, though inferior to that experienced under the Gospel. Jesus declared that when the Spirit of Truth should be sent to guide saints into all truth, He should reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. His language evidently indicates a new and special work of the Holy Spirit in the consciences of sinners as well as in the hearts of His people. For why should it be said that the Spirit should do these things after Christ should go away and send him into the world, if he were doing the same things now before he was sent? It was profitable for the Disciples that Christ should go away because otherwise the Comforter would not come; and when Jesus says, "When he is come he will reprove the world of sin," etc., it is necessarily to be inferred that He was not doing the same thing before His coming; otherwise His coming would make no difference. We conclude that since the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the exaltation of the Redeemer, repentance is granted in a fuller sense than before; for it is said that Jesus has been exalted a Prince and a Savior to grant repentance. These disciples of John were not only

penitents, but they were also promised pardon of sin; for it is stated that John preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Mark, he did not preach the baptism of water for the remission of sins, but the baptism of repentance. In Mark 1:4 we read, "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." In Luke iii: 3, it is written, "And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." John declares in Matt. iii: 11, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance," not unto remission. Those who had a genuine repentance which they witnessed by baptism, were promised the remission of their past sins. So we see that men may have penitence and pardon and not be converted; or, in other words, repentance, pardon, and water baptism all together do not constitute conversion in the sense in which Christ uses the term; for these Apostles no doubt had all these, yet were unconverted. Now among professed Christians generally these experiences are supposed undoubtedly to give anyone a title to the name of Christian, as well as a title to future blessedness; but Jesus says "verily, verily," it is not sufficient to admit one into the Kingdom. How strange that men

should so far miss the truth with New Testaments in their hands. When our theology fails to agree with the plain statements of Scripture, it needs to be revised. But these Apostles had further experiences and gifts. The Lord Jesus had called them to preach His Gospel, and they were even now under tutelage to this end. It is true that they were not yet sent, except to proclaim the call to repentance, and to announce the near approach of the heavenly kingdom, as John the Baptist was doing. It is generally supposed that a genuine call to preach is proof positive of a converted state, but it seems to be disproved by this instance. There is no doubt of the call of these Apostles, and Jesus himself declares them yet unconverted. Nor do I think this an exceptional case. No doubt unconverted men are frequently called to the work of the ministry. I judge from my own personal experience, as well as from observation, that this is true. But while they may feel a call while unconverted, they are never commissioned or sent, until they are properly and fully qualified for the work. So the Lord told these Apostles to go into all the world and preach His Gospel, but to tarry at Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. Many



men make the mistake of running before they are sent, taking the call for the commission, as Moses did, and with equally fruitless results. Many are probably called, but few are actually chosen, to the work of the ministry. But these Apostles were not only called to preach the Gospel but, like John the Baptist, they were baptizers. They seem to have had good success, even surpassing the Baptizer himself in some instances. (John iv: 1, 2.) Water baptism is a matter of comparatively so small importance that unconverted men were competent to administer it properly. Jesus did not baptize with water, since that is not His baptism, and His refraining from doing so is most significant. These Apostles were also empowered to heal the sick, and to cast out demons, that is, they were the workers of miracles. According to the Roman church this would entitle them in the most eminent sense to be called saints, as she teaches that none but saints can work miracles. But here we see that unconverted men made miraculous cures, and found demons subject to them in Jesus' name. The man who has all faith so as to be able to remove mountains, if destitute of love, is nothing of a Christian, according to the Apostle Paul. There are greater works than performing

miraculous cures upon the bodies of men; works which none but a real saint can be instrumental in performing. These are the greater works which Jesus promises His people that they shall do after He goes to the Father. To be used as the instrument in the salvation of the soul from sin is a greater work than the raising of a physically dead man to life, and a much stronger proof of a converted state. Unconverted men may be used in the one work, but none but saved men are ever used in the other. These Apostles had sufficient faith in God to go out and preach the coming kingdom without salaries, depending on God, from day to day, for support. Jesus directed them to provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in their purses, neither scrip, or haversack, for their journey, nor two coats, so that one could be used when the other wore out, or shoes, or even staves, for defense; since the workman was worthy of his meat. Thus they were left to depend wholly upon God's providence for the supply of the veriest necessities of life. Yet their wants were all supplied. Jesus asked them, before sending them out into the larger field of the whole world, "When I sent ye out without purse or scrip or shoes, lacked ye anything?" And they replied "Nothing, Lord."

Then Jesus said, "But now, he that hath a purse let him take it, and likewise his scrip." He would not permit them to spend their own substance in the first instance, but now His ministers are permitted to use all their possessions in the work of preaching the Gospel. In this manifestation of their faith in God's promise for their support, how do these unconverted men put to shame many at the present time who profess to be truly converted. Modern preachers must have assurances from responsible men that their wants will be supplied before they will go forth in the discharge of their duty to God. God's promise that they that preach the Gospel shall live of the Gospel, is not sufficient for them. They want something more substantial and trustworthy to rely upon. It is all right and proper that men who preach the Gospel should accept of support from those who are taught; but to demand assurance of support beforehand is *prima facie* evidence of infidelity. They are Christ's ambassadors and should look to Him alone for help; otherwise they become servants of men. It is perfectly natural that we should seek to please those upon whom we are dependent; and it is morally impossible that we should not do so. But St. Paul declares, "Do I seek to

please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.”—Gal. i: 10. To depend upon men for support in preaching the Gospel is to invite an irresistible temptation to seek to please them.

These Apostles, then, to whom the language of the text is addressed, were penitents, who had been baptized with water, who enjoyed the pardon of their sins, were themselves baptizers, had been called to preach the Gospel, and were empowered to work miracles, and did preach the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven, going out empty-handed, depending upon God alone for the supply of their personal needs. Yet they were still, according to Christ’s testimony, unconverted, and unfit for a place in the kingdom whose advent they proclaimed. They had forsaken their avocations, and, having left all, were following Jesus, expecting their compensation in the kingdom of God. How much men may do and suffer and yet be unfitted for membership in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. They may have wonderful gifts of oratory and persuasion, and great faith; they may give all their goods to feed the poor, and give their bodies up to the flames, for religion’s sake, and yet come short of the glory of God. Self-will and

spiritual pride, of which they may be unconscious, may be at the bottom of all their motives, and Divine love, which must be imparted, and which is the only motive with which God can be pleased, may be wholly absent. How important that we should walk in judgment light, wherein the secrets of all hearts are revealed, lest we trust in our own hearts and are eventually found to be fools.

III. The next subject of inquiry is as to the indications these Apostles gave of their need of being converted. Did they in any way, or in many ways, show that they were not spiritual? I think even a cursory view of their characters and conduct will afford proof of their carnality, and a careful survey will develop many more marks of the natural man. The question which called forth the declaration of our Lord concerning their need of conversion, itself exhibits their want of spiritual understanding, which is said to characterize the natural man. The question arose from an entire misapprehension as to the nature of Christ's kingdom. They shared the views of their countrymen in general, that the Messiah, at His advent, was to set up a world kingdom like that of David and Solomon, which would deliver them from a

foreign yoke and give them independence and dominion. This conception was so firmly established in their minds, that nothing but a spiritual enlightenment could remove it. So up to the time of Christ's ascension to Heaven, after all the lessons of the crucifixion and the resurrection, they still cling to this idea, and one of their number at this late date, asked Him, "Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" They could not yet grasp the spiritual truth concerning the nature of Christ's kingdom. The Jews generally misapplied those Scriptures which foretold Christ's millennial reign, to His spiritual kingdom under the Gospel age. This misconception concerning the nature of the kingdom about to be set up, accounts for their readiness to forsake all to follow Him. They were convinced that He was the true Messiah, and hence had no doubt that He would set up a kingdom; and they hoped for emoluments and honors in that kingdom. They did not seem to consider their humble origin, their want of learning and culture, as any bar to their advancement to the highest offices in the future state, about to be erected; nor do they for a moment seem to suspect their ability to fill these positions of responsibility. They seem to have had all the self-

confidence of ignorance. The division of the spoils was a question which frequently exercised their minds, and about which they contended among themselves. James and John do not seem to have been overburdened with modesty, as they preferred the request for the two highest places, basing their pretensions probably on their relationship to Jesus; as it is held by many critics that their mother Salome was the sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Simon Peter might have based his claim for preference on the fact that he and his brother Andrew were the first Disciples called by the Lord to follow Him. Judas Iscariot, being treasurer of the Apostolic college, might consider himself also a proper aspirant for first honors. We are not informed as to the number of candidates, nor who they all were; but it seems that they were unable to settle the point among themselves, and so agreed to refer the matter to Christ as arbiter. His reply must have been a great surprise to them, as well as quite a check to their ambitious hopes. James and John, those sons of thunder, were ready to accept any conditions, so that they might have promise of the coveted places. Jesus said to them, "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with my baptism?" They replied



unhesitatingly, "We can." How little conception did they have of what was in store for them. James soon suffered martyrdom at the hands of Herod, but John, chastened by many sufferings, was the only Apostle who died a natural death, according to tradition. Their request not only shows spiritual ignorance, but also an unholy ambition for preferment, and a failure to prefer their brethren before themselves. They felt, spoke, and acted, just as natural men do, and showed that self-seeking spirit which would have laid the foundation for disputes and divisions which would have inevitably rent them asunder when their Lord was removed from them. They had in their hearts the very principle of sectarianism. Their ignorance of spiritual truth, and their inability to comprehend it, was shown in many other ways. Christ's parables were enigmas to them until He interpreted them to them, and then their full import was not by any means grasped by them. They did not understand the necessity of Christ's death nor its significance. When Jesus spoke of His approaching trial and crucifixion, Peter took it upon himself to rebuke Him, saying "Be it far from thee, Lord." It was then that Jesus called him Satan, and declared that his speech savored not of the things of God, but of the things

of men. Peter was, no doubt, sincere in what he said. He saw his hopes of worldly honor toppling, as Jesus talked of His approaching death, and his consternation gave him unwonted boldness, so that he even dared to rebuke his Lord. He simply did not know what he was talking about, and his ignorance pleaded his excuse. The whole scheme of salvation through the death and resurrection of the Messiah was a sealed book to them; they had not the remotest conception of it, as their language and conduct show. What a wonderful revolution must be wrought in them before they are fitted to go out and disciple the nations, and to turn the world upside down!

These facts are not generally set forth, as men have a superstitious reverence for the Apostles in their unconverted state, which the conditions do not warrant. Much could not reasonably be expected of ignorant fishermen and tax-gatherers, imbued with all the prejudices of their race, until they should be Divinely enlightened by the gift and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. When their Lord was crucified, so little did they understand the import of His death, that they gave up all as lost. They had hoped, they said, that it was He that should redeem Israel. But now their hopes

were blasted, not comprehending that their Lord's death was necessary to that redemption. And although they had been told by the Lord himself that He should rise from the dead, they do not seem to have remembered His words, although His enemies did not forget His prediction, and took precautions against such an event. Yet His Disciples, instead of confidently waiting for such a dénouement, appear to have been surprised by it, and can scarcely credit the news when they are informed of it. Thomas declared that he must not only have ocular, but tangible, demonstration of the truth of the report before he would believe it. What blindness of unbelief does all this show. There were many things that Jesus would fain have told them, but such was their ignorance of spiritual things that He forbore, knowing that they could not understand Him. How much was dependent upon the presence and guidance of the Comforter! How greatly was Christ straitened until His baptism (His death and suffering) was accomplished! It was principally by having His words recalled to their remembrance by the Holy Spirit, that His teachings while with them were of any profit to them. But however much depended upon the coming of the Comforter then, just as much depends

upon His presence and teaching now, as the natural man has no more spiritual understanding now than it had then. Men may have correct theories, but they are empty words without the Holy Ghost. "The Kingdom of God is not in word, but in power."

But the inability of the Apostles to understand spiritual truth, though a sufficient proof, is not the only proof of their unconverted state. Their evident self-seeking is another evidence of carnality. It is true that they had left all their temporal effects to follow Christ; but it is plain that they did so in hopes of bettering their condition. It was not simply spiritual good that they sought, when they consented to follow Christ. They were looking after the main chance also. Their motives may have been mixed, and probably were so. But it is clear that they had in view great advantage to themselves, and advantage of a worldly nature. That they were themselves conscious that their motives were unworthy, is evidenced from the fact that when Jesus asked them what they were wrangling about as they traveled, they were ashamed to tell Him; but the Evangelist tells us that they were contending about who should be greatest. Spiritually obtuse as they were, they felt mean over their selfish

ambitions, and would gladly have concealed them from Jesus. How strikingly their littleness stands out in comparison with His infinite magnanimity. No wonder they felt abashed, though they may not have realized just why. While He relinquished heaven that He might lift up the fallen and rescue the perishing, they quarreled about the division of spoils. O, the infinite pity and compassion of the Savior, that He could bear with them so patiently. They knew not what they did. They had no sympathy with Him in His work, for they did not comprehend it. Their affection for Him was purely natural; they knew Him after the flesh only. But such knowledge is of no value in Gospel work. The Apostle Paul declares, "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more."—II Cor. v: 16. This desire for preference is natural, and always characterizes the natural man. It must be replaced by a love that prefers others before itself. "In honor preferring one another." This is impossible to the natural man. He invariably prefers himself. Had these Apostles continued in this frame of mind, or state of mind, they would have been unfitted for the work to which they were called. Their desire for

superiority would have lead to continual emulation, envy, and strife, so that they could not have co-operated in Gospel work. If they wrangled while Christ was with them, they would have soon quarreled and anathematized each other after His departure. Jesus accused some of following Him because they ate of the loaves and fishes and were filled, and the Apostles were not free from mercenary and selfish motives in following Christ. At one time, when the conditions of discipleship had been clearly set forth, Peter, speaking for the others as well as himself, said to his Lord, "We have left all and followed thee, what shall we have therefore?" They seemed to fear that following Christ was to be all self-denial and no recompense. This anxiety concerning what they were to get, exposes their self-seeking motives. They made it manifestly true of themselves as declared by the Apostle, "All men seek that which is their own, and not that which is Jesus Christ's." St. Paul asserts that love seeketh not her own. So they showed themselves to be destitute of love, without which we are nothing. This mark of selfishness and self-seeking, so clearly seen in the conduct of these Apostles, is also seen among many modern professors. It is prominent in the lives of many pro-



fessed ministers of the Gospel. They are rivals of one another for places of power and influence, and emulous of distinction and preferment. There is great strife among them which one of them shall be greatest, have the best places, and receive the highest salaries. The question is decided by majority vote, and all the arts of the politician are called into play in the struggle for supremacy. These manifestations just as clearly prove that most modern ministers are as truly unconverted as were the Apostles before Pentecost, and that they are just as unfit, to say the least, as were they, for the work of preaching the unsearchable riches of the Gospel. It is not necessary to enlarge upon this fact, as it is plain and patent to everyone.

The proof of carnality in the Apostles is seen further in their intolerance. On a certain occasion they found one casting out devils in Jesus' name and they forbade him. The Lord had commissioned them to cast out demons, and they seemed to consider that this gave them a monopoly of business, and any other person presuming to cast out devils was, in their estimation, infringing upon their rights. This, again, is an exhibition of selfish, unsanctified, human nature. What mattered it to them that their fellowmen should suffer from de-



moniacal possession? Much better it should be so than that some one else should heal them. Like many physicians of this present day, they were, who prefer that the patient should die *secundum artem* rather than that he should be healed irregularly. But was the man actually casting out devils? Yes. And doing it in Jesus' name? O yes. And yet they forbade him? What for? Because, forsooth, "He followeth not us." He failed to take out a license at our place of business. He must not be allowed to do good without our consent. He does not wear our badge, our livery. Therefore he is an heretic, an enemy, and must be prohibited, and put down and driven out at all hazards. O the narrow, miserable, spirit of bigotry and intolerance! How hateful and contemptible does it appear. It is one of the meanest principles of the human heart. How cruel and bloodthirsty does it become when roused, and how many thousands of innocents has it slain. It is the firstborn of hell, and the ugliest whelp of sin. Said Madame Roland on her way to the scaffold, "O Liberty! how many crimes are committed in thy name!" So may it be said of religious zeal, urged on by ignorance and intolerance. When Jesus was informed of what His Disciples had done,

He countermanded their order, saying that those who were not against Him were on His side. Blind bigotry does not know its own friends. Said Jesus, "No man can do a miracle in my name and lightly speak evil of me." An enlightened understanding and a sanctified heart will welcome every recruit into the army of the Lord, from whatever direction he may come. Let such an one but be convinced that God's work is being done and that souls are being saved from sin, and he at once recognizes a fellow-laborer and a brother. Notwithstanding the generally admitted policy of religious tolerance, intolerance is not dead, though it cannot manifest itself generally through legislative enactments. There is just as much of it in unsanctified human nature as ever, and it breaks over legal barriers to manifest itself on many occasions. In many more instances it is shown in petty persecutions, and in devious ways to hinder what cannot wholly be prevented. For the comparative absence of religious intolerance we are indebted principally to the waning of religious zeal among the masses. The tolerant spirit of Jesus, who was willing that anyone should exorcise demons in His name, is an example for us to imitate. If we possess His Spirit it will not be so difficult for us to

follow His example. Truth is the peculiar property of no man nor association of men. It is for any man who is willing to buy it at its market price.

The disposition to revenge insults is another mark of an unconverted state. We are told that at one time as Christ and His Disciples were passing through Samaria on their way to Jerusalem, and were about to pass through a certain village in Samaria and to lodge there, the inhabitants refused to allow them to do so, because they were on their way to Jerusalem. The religious feud between the Jews and the Samaritans arising out of their respective claims to the possession of the proper place of worship, was the cause of this refusal. Because Christ and His Apostles thought it was necessary to go up to Jerusalem to worship, seemed to these Samaritans to amount to an ignoring of the claims of their temple; and in spite, they resorted to this means of annoying these Jews. The Apostles, or at least some of them, were much incensed and insulted. They felt revengeful, and desired to inflict dire punishment on these narrow-minded heretics. They approached their Master saying, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?" The Apostles who asked the question were the same

two, James and John, who aspired to sit in the two places of honor, at His right hand and at His left. They were ready to burn up a whole town because they were refused entertainment among them. No doubt the fact that they were Samaritans, and false religionists, tended to whet the edge of their resentment. It is easy and natural for men to indulge cruel feelings toward those who dare to differ with them in religious opinions, and whom they consider heretics. No punishment seems too severe for such. So John Calvin must have felt when he had Servitus burned for differing with him on the doctrine of the Trinity, a subject neither of them could comprehend. Men imagine under such circumstances that their indignation arises out of their zeal for God and the truth, when in reality it comes from their attachment to their own opinions. Zeal for the truth is impersonal, and does not inspire murderous feelings toward opposers. Men never wish to kill for Christ's sake, but for wounded vanity's sake, or for the sake of pride of opinion. These Apostles may have imagined that it was on Jesus' account they felt so incensed against these villagers; but it was really on their own account. But while these Disciples were thinking of vengeance, their Lord was calm and unruffled at the

affront offered Him, and showed no disposition to punish anyone. Whence came His immeasurable superiority over His companions? By natural birth and association He was but their equal, and younger than most of them. How does He come to be so lifted above natural human frailties and weaknesses? He moves among them more than a philosopher, and He must have been, as He claimed, the Son of God. He calmly rebuked His Disciples saying, "Ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." It would be well if His professed followers had always remembered this lesson. Much cruel persecution, and the shedding of much innocent blood, would have been thus avoided. The desire to revenge ourselves, or to persecute, is positive evidence of an unsaved condition.

Another mark of carnality shown by the Apostles was their fear of man and of death. They were not destitute of natural courage. Peter was ready to fight for his Lord and Master, and did not stop to count the odds against him. His Lord had said something about the desirability of their having swords, and Peter, understanding the language literally, could see no use of having a sword unless it was to be used. So at the first opportunity he

drew it in the defense of his Master against the posse that had come out to arrest Him. He succeeded in cutting off an ear at the first stroke, when he was thunderstruck by the command of his Master to put the weapon up. He was not to be allowed to fight, that was plain; and his courage began to ooze away. We should not be surprised that Peter should have thus misinterpreted the Savior's language. Any natural man would have done the same; though when Jesus declared two swords were enough, after declaring that the ownership of a sword was so important a matter that a Disciple should even sell his garment to buy one, it ought to have caused a doubt as to His meaning. Natural men still misinterpret Him in like manner concerning the washing of feet, and other things, supposing that He is to be understood literally; and no doubt they will continue so to do until the end. As soon as the Disciples found themselves defenseless, they became panic-stricken, and forsook their Lord and fled. Their natural fear of death prevailed, and their love for their Master was not strong enough to hold them to their allegiance. The instinct of self-preservation asserted itself, and they played the coward. They seemed to be unpromising material to make martyrs

out of. Their Lord had warned them not to fear them that could no more than kill the body, but the cowardice was in them, and they could not resist it. Their Lord had told them that they would do this, but they could not credit the statement, and Peter had declared himself ready to die with Him. He declared the others might run away, but he never would. He soon learned the value of self-confidence; and because he was most self-confident, he suffered the greatest humiliation of any of them. He and John, the beloved Disciples, did not run far, but turned and followed Christ and His captors at a distance, and slipped into the hall of judgment where Christ was on trial. John seems to have escaped observation, or at least was not molested; but Peter had made himself conspicuous by using his sword. At all events he was recognized and accused of being one of Christ's Disciples. Moved by fear for his life, he promptly denied the charge. Again he was accused and again he denied, saying, "I know not the man." A third time he was accused by several persons who confidently declared that they recognized Peter as one of Christ's Disciples. Then he began to curse and swear, not, as we would say, profanely, but to attest with an oath, or a number of oaths,



the truth of his denial. Then the cock crew, and Jesus turned and looked at Peter, and he remembered his Lord's warning; and he went out and wept bitterly. If it is desired by anyone to prove the propriety of a Christian man's oath, this, I believe, is the only example of it, in the New Testament. Peter's shame was great, and his sorrow no doubt sincere, but it did not inspire him with courage to acknowledge his Lord.

The Disciples were of the common people and stood in great awe of the Jewish rulers. They were timid and seem to have been completely demoralized by the arrest and trial of their Lord. They lost all confidence in their cause, and all power of initiative, and were wholly at a loss what to do. They were about ready to return to their fishing nets in despair of the cause. They were in no state of mind to fit them for any enterprise, such as their enemies seemed to fear, who charged that they suspected them of a design to steal Christ's body and conceal it, and then proclaim Him risen from the dead. Such a scheme was furthest from their thoughts. They sought only to secure their own safety. While their weakness is humiliating to contemplate, it is what might be reasonably expected. A contrary course would have been

extraordinary. They were simple, law-abiding men, ignorant of plots and conspiracies, and in the habit of depending upon, and implicitly following, their Master. When He was so suddenly and unexpectedly taken from them, they were bewildered and terrified. How unfitted they were for the great work of establishing the religion of Jesus! Truly, it is clearly apparent that a great revolution in their characters was absolutely necessary to their success as Gospel evangelists. How could they face the perils of the ministry, the threats of rulers, and the prospects of martyrdom, while such a fear of death possessed them? Peter, the boldest of them, cowered under the accusations of a maid-servant, and trembled for his life. John seems to be the only one of them who witnessed the crucifixion of the Savior. But the others lingered round, hoping that something favorable might transpire, possibly indulging a faint hope of their Lord's resurrection. That this event was not confidently expected is seen in the conduct of the women going to embalm His body after He was already risen. And when they found the body gone, they did not appear to think that He might be risen, but that someone had removed the corpse to some other place. How little expectation could they

have had then of His rising from the dead. All this fear and panic and bewilderment show undeniably their ignorance of the significance of the events then transpiring about them, their unbelief, and their general spiritual obtuseness and stupidity.

IV. The last point for consideration is concerning the time of their conversion, and the manifest results. We learn from the record that the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, while it created rejoicing among the Disciples, and renewed confidence, yet made no spiritual change in them. They still remained ignorant of the nature of Christ's Kingdom, and were still fearful and incredulous. Peter, it is true, had lost some of his self-confidence, for when his Lord catechized him as to his superior love for Him, saying, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" he would make no profession of love greater than that of his brethren, replying, "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." The question was asked three times, since Peter had thrice denied his Lord, and he was instructed to feed Christ's sheep and lambs, his Lord thus indicating that he was restored to favor, and that his lapses were forgotten. Just before Christ ascended to the Father, He commissioned

His Apostles to disciple all nations, telling them to tarry at Jerusalem until the Holy Ghost should be given to endue them with power. Before His death Jesus had said to Simon Peter, "Simon, Satan hath desired to have thee, that he might sift thee as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." On the day of Pentecost, fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus, and ten days after His ascension, the Apostles and other Disciples were assembled in an upper room in Jerusalem, waiting for the promise of the Father. And suddenly the Holy Spirit fell upon them, and filled and purified their hearts. And cloven tongues of fire appeared and sat upon each of them, and they spake in unknown tongues, "that is, in languages unknown to the speakers," as the Spirit gave them utterance. Their enthusiasm and their ability to address their auditors in a variety of languages struck them with astonishment and admiration. But the great work of Pentecost took place in the natures of the Disciples.

"Their natures were changed, their minds  
Transformed in all their powers."

They became new men in Christ Jesus. The vail was taken away, that they might know the

things freely given to them of God. Their hearts were filled with love to God and all mankind. They were delivered from the Spirit of fear, and received the Spirit of adoption; of power, of love, and of a sound mind. Sin, the sting of death, was removed, and they no longer feared them that killed the body only. Peter remembering his Lord's injunction to strengthen his brethren, arose, and preached the first Gospel sermon under the influence of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. He told his hearers that he understood the meaning of what was transpiring; that it was a fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, "It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy." How quickly Peter began to understand and apply the Scriptures, when he had received the Holy Spirit. His Bible was a new book, full of new truths, seen in a new light. He learned more truth in a few minutes under the instruction of the Spirit than he had learned before in all his life. And what power there was in his

preaching! His words pierced the hearts of his hearers like sharp pointed arrows. Their sinful lives rose up before them to confront and condemn them. Their excuses and apologies for sin faded away; their refuges of lies were overthrown, their self-righteousness in which they had trusted turned into an accusing enemy; they saw themselves without a refuge, lost and undone; and they cried out in their agony, "Men and brethren, what must we do?" Jesus promised that His Disciples should do greater works than He had done, after He went to His Father. Here began the fulfillment of His promise. Here was a greater work than He had done while on earth. Peter's preaching convinced men of sin, and led three thousand souls to salvation in one day. This was the era of the conversion of the Apostles. At this time they became New Testament saints, children of God. Because they were sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His son into their hearts crying, Abba, Father. Now they were truly converted, in the sense in which the Lord Jesus uses the word. They were born again, born from above. Peter declares that their hearts were purified by faith at this time. Here is where the peculiar experiences belonging to the Christian dispensation began. Here the mystery

hidden from ages and from generations was first made manifest to the saints, which is Christ in us the hope of glory. And what a wonderful transformation was wrought in them. These selfish, self-seeking Apostles, along with the other converts, lost sight of individual ownership in earthly things. Instead of seeking something for themselves, they were ready to share everything with their brethren. They became as little children in their freedom from care, and their enjoyment of the present blessings, without anxious thought for the morrow. They ate their meat with gladness and singleness of heart. They called nothing their own. They realized the experience described by Wesley:—

“Nothing on earth I call my own—  
A stranger to the world, unknown,  
I all their goods despise.  
I trample on their whole delight,  
And seek a city out of sight;  
A city in the skies.”

Their hearts were pure. Selfishness, and envy, and jealousy were expelled by love.

“On the wings of His love, they were carried above  
All sin, and temptation, and pain,  
And they could not believe that they ever should grieve,  
That they ever should suffer again.”

Their hearts were full of good-will toward all mankind, and they could not conceive why they should be regarded with hatred and scorn. How



pleasant it is to contemplate this happy state of affairs. It was something new under the sun. Nothing like it ever was seen before. It was unique, unprecedented, almost incredible. The world beheld it with amazement. The common people looked on with approval, but the rulers and religious leaders were alarmed and disconcerted. They doubted what the outcome might be. They feared their craft was in danger. They declared, with the appearance of injured innocence, that the Disciples were about to bring this man's blood upon them, after they had cried out vehemently, "His blood be upon us and our children." It was upon them, and they could not wash it off. So they hailed the Apostles Peter and John before them, scourged them, and commanded them to preach no more in the name of Jesus. Since these Apostles had shown such timidity and cowardice a few short weeks previously, they no doubt imagined that they would be easily managed, and terrified by a show of severity. But to their great surprise they stood up boldly and declared their intention to obey God rather than man. "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them that they had

been with Jesus."—Acts iv: 13. Here we see what a wonderful change had been wrought in these Apostles by their conversion. They had lost the fear of man that bringeth a snare, and the fear of death was gone, and they were ready to suffer and die, if need be, for the testimony of Jesus. With them there was no more faltering, no taking counsel of flesh and blood. With the warning that Jesus had given him, Peter saw looming up in the distance a gibbet and a martyr's doom. But beyond that he saw a martyr's crown and a martyr's reward, and he went cheerfully on to his fate, anxious only that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus. Worldly ambitions and hopes of preferment had been removed. They saw the highest place was the place of greatest responsibility and greatest danger. To be prominent was to challenge persecution. But they found the promised presence and help of the Master always at hand, and they went forward with serene confidence and unshaken fidelity. Soon the storm burst upon their devoted heads. Stephen was stoned, James, the brother of John, slain with the sword, and Peter imprisoned; and the little band was scattered, everywhere preaching the Word; so that the per-

secution at Jerusalem only turned out to the furtherance of the Gospel. We do not learn how James died, but Stephen, as the stones fell upon his prostrate body, saw Heaven opened, and Jesus waiting to receive him into paradise. Peter was delivered by an angel out of the hands of Herod, and so escaped death for the present, remaining with his brethren to suffer and to toil. But before Stephen died he was instrumental in God's hands, in planting the seeds of Gospel truth in the heart and conscience of one of his persecutors, who was destined to become the great champion of the new religion. A young man, Saul of Tarsus, held the clothes of those who stoned Stephen, and was consenting unto his death. And a short time afterward, on his way to Damascus with authority from the chief priests to imprison other Christians, revolving these matters in his mind as he rode along the highway, in the heat of the day, suddenly he got a call from Heaven to obey the Gospel to which he had listened. And he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but, yielding, he was converted, and became one of the most signal instances of the power of the Gospel to convince and save. From all these examples we see what a wonderful thing it is to be converted, in the true

Gospel sense. And it is just as wonderful now as then. But much of that which is called conversion at the present day fails to measure up to this standard given us in the Gospel. In fact, but little of it will favorably compare with the experience of the Apostles before Pentecost. It falls far short of even that standard. And if the Apostles needed to be converted to qualify them for a place in the Kingdom of Heaven, how much more do the modern professors of Christianity need the same experience. The standard of Christian experience and life has been so lowered, that terms representing it have lost their meaning. That the standard will ever be generally raised is not to be expected. It is contrary to all experience to hope for such a result. Evil men and seducers will continue to wax worse and worse, and conditions will not improve. But the warning voice is raised, that perchance some sincere souls may be found who will heed the cry and be advised in time. At all events the trumpet must be sounded until Zion's warfare is accomplished. I leave the reader to make the application to his own case, and I simply ask the question of each one who shall peruse these lines, Are you so converted as to fit you for a place in the Kingdom of Heaven?

## LOVE

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LOVE is the fulfilling of the law. — Rom. xiii: 10.

BELOVED, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God. — I John iv: 7. •

CHARITY (love) never faileth. — I Cor. xiii: 8.

THE subject chosen for the theme of this discourse is of transcendent importance and interest. The gifts of an archangel would be inadequate to do it justice, and I feel my utter inability for the task. To set forth the subject as it deserves is a greater achievement than to “paint the bow in the bended heavens.” The subject is infinite, for God is love; and the love of God passeth knowledge. We may apprehend it, but we cannot comprehend it. My soul says with the poet:—

“O, could I speak the matchless worth,  
O, could I sound the glories forth,  
Which in my Savior shine;  
I'd soar and touch the heavenly strings,  
And vie with Gabriel while he sings  
In notes almost divine.”

But though I cannot do justice to the theme,  
I will do what I can to describe and magnify this

Divine love. Natural affection in human beings may be considered as having some likeness to Divine love, but it is also related to the instinctive affection of the lower animals. It is sometimes used in Holy Writ as an emblem of God's love for His creatures and consequently must be somewhat analogous. Yet it is but a faint emblem, at best, of love Divine. The Apostle John declared that God is love, and all His moral attributes must therefore be emanations of love. His mercy, His justice, His veracity, His holiness, are but different expressions of His love, and must therefore be consistent with it. His tender mercies are said to be over all His works, and to endure forever. This being true, it follows that His love is universal; that it includes, and extends to, all His creatures. As it is the property of love to seek the good of all its objects, it must be inferred that God desires the welfare and happiness of all His dependent creatures. His love, if universal, cannot be partial. He cannot desire the welfare of but a part of His creatures. He can make no difference between those who do not differ from one another, since that would be partiality. It does not follow that He loves all equally and alike regardless of character, but that love can make no difference between

those of the same character. Now as all men are alike involved in sin and lost to God, all being morally homogeneous, God must love them all alike. To suppose that God can love a part of a lost race, and hate another part, no worse, nor more lost than their fellows, is to say that God's love is not universal, and that His tender mercies are not over all His works. It is a misrepresentation of God's character and a contradiction of the teachings of both reason and Scripture. If God can make provision for the infallible salvation of a part of the lost race, He could just as easily have made provision for the certain salvation of the whole race, since they do not differ in moral character. To suppose that God has not made such universal provision when He might have done so, is to assert that He has pleasure in the death of those who die, because no provision is made for their rescue, and that He is not love but hatred toward the mass of His creatures. Such a view dishonors God and presents His character in an unlovely light. It is nothing less than a libel on infinite love. Men derived such opinions, not from the Scriptures, nor from nature, but from metaphysical speculations. Because they could not, to their own satisfaction, harmonize free will



and foreknowledge, they have not hesitated to blacken the Divine character, and discredit Him with reasonable men, who cannot reverence a love so partial. If God can save one man unconditionally, by the mere exertion of His omnipotence, He will undoubtedly thus save all men. The love that takes in one lost sinner abounds and extends beyond the limits of creation, and beyond all human or angelic needs. It is true that God is said to hate some persons, but this is a comparative term signifying to love less; as Christians are commanded to hate father and mother, that is love them less than they love Christ. But it is not without foresight of faith or good works, that some are loved more than others, but because of their difference in moral character. It is impossible that it should be otherwise, else God would be a capricious tyrant, delighting Himself in the misery of His creatures. God must delight in all His actions. He must be infinitely pleased with Himself and His own conduct; hence on such a supposition, He must delight in the death of Him that dieth, since it is the result of His own action; but He swears by Himself saying, "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, but rather that he should turn and live."

God's love is not only universal and impartial, but also eternal. So long as He is God He will be love, without variableness or change. When it is possible to do His creatures good He will do it; love will compel it. His love and mercy do not end with the present age, but will continue, undiminished, forever. I care not what the consequences of such a view of God's character may be, they must be good. To hold otherwise is to limit the Holy One, and confine Him within the narrow bounds of our finite comprehension. The Scriptures do not teach universal salvation, because they do not teach unconditional salvation. A certain part of those who hear the Gospel are saved, because only a part elect to be saved. The damnation of the remainder is not the result of God's election, but of their own. They choose for themselves and decide their own fate. If God's will were done they would be saved; for "He will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." It is because they have their own wills in the matter that they are lost. What the future holds for such, of opportunity or retrieval, is hidden from human ken. No hope is held out in God's revelation. Everything there written is forbidding, and discouraging to hope. But the hopelessness of

their case does not arise out of God's unwillingness to have mercy. If their condition is hopeless, it is because of what they are, not because of God's want of love. No saved man is the happier because of their despair. He would fain share that happiness with all created intelligences. Like his Father he has no pleasure in their death. And if, in the coming ages of eternity, there should be hope for the lost, he will welcome that hope with enthusiasm.

The Divine justice, which is pledged to punish the guilty, is but an expression of His love. It is not a manifestation of hatred or ill-will. It is for the best interests of sinners, as well as for the protection of the righteous, that disobedience and rebellion should be punished; and punitive justice is the vengeance of love, not of malice. The duration of punishment must depend upon its effect upon the culprit. The discouraging phase of the subject is that those who can successfully resist the influence of love in its merciful manifestations are not likely to be subdued by severity. Their moral state is such that the probable effect will be to harden rather than to subdue. Herein seems to lie the hopelessness of their state. Punishment will tend to produce only the worldly sorrow which

deprecates the punishment, but does not hate the cause of it. Nevertheless, the best possible thing will be done for every human soul.

The love which animates Deity is the same principle which dwells in the heart of each believer. St. Peter declares that saints are made partakers of the Divine nature. As God is love, it is love of which we are made partakers. This is called perfect love, since it can have no imperfection, being Divine. The adjective distinguishes it from human love, which is essentially partial and therefore imperfect. Some have supposed that perfect love is a peculiar kind of Divine love, and that there is another kind which is not perfect; and that most Christians have the imperfect kind. This conception is not only contrary to reason and absurd, but also out of harmony with Scripture. It is true St. John speaks of perfect love, but he says nothing about any other kind, and its existence is only an inference. It exists in the natural love of the creature and nowhere else. There can be no imperfect Divine love, since it is the Divine nature which cannot be imperfect. St. John positively declares that we have perfect love or none at all. "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not

his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected."—I John ii: 4, 5. "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."—I John iv: 12. "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death."—I John iii: 14. We see from these extracts that the Apostle had no knowledge of an imperfect love of God. If love were a human product, it might well be imperfect; but since it comes from God and is of His essence, it must be perfect in kind. In development, it admits of growth and increase. In other words it expands as our spiritual faculties develop. It is the perfection of the Christian dispensation and of the Christian character. Under the law it was said, "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." But under the Gospel, love casts out tormenting fear and makes our natures Divine. Love is the mind of Christ, the image of God in the soul of man. As in God, so in the Christian, it is the root and base of all the moral attributes and characteristics. From it flow all holy tempers and affections as streams from a fountain. It is the Christian's holiness. It is the Lord our righteous-

ness. It is the righteousness which exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees. With this love in his heart the saint can sing with Zinzendorf: —

“Jesus, thy blood and righteousness  
My beauty are, my glorious dress.  
Midst flaming worlds in these arrayed,  
With joy shall I lift up my head.”

Love is said to be the fulfilling of the law. We are not to understand from this statement that love meets the demands of the perfect law of God in every detail; that it enables the possessor to fulfill the letter of the law without error, or mistake, or imperfection. It means, first, that love is the principle of obedience; it is the essential part of obedience; so that whoever possesses love will obey God so far as he knows His will and so far as he is able to do it. To suppose that a man loves God and is unwilling to obey Him is to suppose a contradiction. Jesus declares, “If any man love me, he will keep my words.” And St. John says, “This is the love of God that we keep his commandments.” Since love is disposed to keep God’s commandments, if its possessor does not do so, it must be from causes beyond his control. In intention and will he fulfills the law, though in fact he may come short of it. In this sense, love is the fulfilling of the law. It is the righteousness of

the law which is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. In the second place love is the fulfilling of the law, because it is the law under which the Christian lives. The law of perfect obedience, as it is called, was fulfilled for us by our Substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ. He kept it in every jot and tittle of its demands. There could be no passing away of that law until it was thus fulfilled. By fulfilling it perfectly, the Redeemer magnified it, made it honorable, justified it as holy and good, requiring nothing impossible or unreasonable. It was just what perfect human beings ought to obey. But as men are not now perfect human beings, they cannot keep it in the letter, as it ought to be kept. But Christ our Substitute kept it for us, and took us out from under it. He satisfies for us all the claims of that law, so that we are dead to it by the body of Christ, and married to another that we might bring forth fruit unto God; that is, the fruit of obedience. Under the old law we brought forth fruit unto death. But the old husband being dead to us, and we to it, we are put under a new law, the law of love; one we can keep. For though we cannot render perfect obedience to a perfect law of works, we can by the grace of God love Him with all our



hearts, and our neighbors as ourselves. Love then is the Christian's law, under which he lives, by which he is measured and judged. Charles Wesley writes concerning this law: —

“That perfect law of thine,  
Savior to me impart;  
The Spirit's law of life divine;  
O, write it on my heart.  
Implant it deep within,  
Whence it may ne'er remove;  
The law of liberty from sin,  
The perfect law of love.”

It is in judging them by this standard that nothing can be laid to the charge of God's elect. They may be convicted of a thousand mistakes and ten thousand faults and infirmities, but these are not violations of Christ's law; they may still love much. Since love is the fulfilling of the law, it follows that no action, no outward conduct fulfills this law. It is assumed as axiomatic, that love will infallibly result in outward conduct in accordance with God's will so far as understood. But this obedient conduct is not the fulfilling of the law. It is the fruit of obedience, not the thing itself. If the outward doing of God's will were obedience to Christ's law, then the failure to do His will from any cause, ignorance or mistake, or what not, would be disobedience, and the child of

God would be no better off than under the old law; since he is always liable to ignorance and mistake. Love itself is obedience, and the conduct is only of moment, as showing the fruit of love. In other words, God does not so much care what a man who loves Him does, as what he intends to do. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."—I Sam. xvi: 7. God's people are not to be judged by meats, and drinks, and holy days, or new moons, or Sabbath days. "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men."—Rom. xiv: 17, 18. Obedience is not, then, a matter of conduct. To so teach is to put men under the law to which they are dead by the body of Christ. Yet this is what is generally done by modern religionists. Men are taught that certain things must be done in order to have God's favor, as if the Kingdom of God were meat and drink. It is proper to teach men what God commands; but to judge their Christian standing by their obedience to this or that ordinance, or rite, or ceremony, is to put them under the law. Many tender consciences are disturbed by fear

that they may have, through ignorance, missed the will of God in some of these outward things. For illustration, take the rite of water baptism. A variety of things is taught by professed Christian teachers on this subject. They differ as to its meaning and object, its mode, the proper subjects, etc., and each one is sure he teaches the truth in the case, and thinks his view is essential to salvation; that unless saints are baptized his way they are not baptized at all. Who is to decide this question? How can the sincere man or woman ever be sure he is properly baptized? One sect tells him he is, while a dozen tell him he is wrong. This is equally true of many other things taught as Christian duties. The answer to this confusing puzzle is, that it makes no difference. The Apostle Paul says respecting such questions, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." If a man love God with all his heart, he has fulfilled the whole law; and such outward things, pertaining to the meat and drink question, as he sees, or thinks he sees, to be his duty, let him do them. If he fully believes that he ought to keep a day holy, let him keep it; if he sees no reason to do so, let him not regard the day. If he thinks some meats unclean, let him avoid such meats till he

learns better; if he sees there is nothing unclean of itself, but only to the man who esteems it so, let him make no distinction in meats. If he thinks he must be baptized with water, let him do so in the manner that will satisfy his conscience. If he sees it as not belonging to the Christian system, let him refuse to submit to it. Whatever he may do or leave undone in the matter is immaterial, so that he love God and his neighbor. If he have the love he obeys and fulfills the whole law. If he have not the love, but is correct in every carnal rite or observance, still he is a violator of every precept of the law, for on love to God and our neighbor hang all the law and the prophets. How gloriously this simplifies matters for us. The law the child of God must keep is written in his heart, not on tables of stone, or in systems of theology, or in books of discipline. Says Charles Wesley:—

"Thy nature be my law,  
Thy spotless sanctity."

Writes the Apostle John, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One and ye know all things." "And ye need not that any man teach you but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things etc." Men's teachings and commandments bring saints into bondage, but God's law is a law of

liberty, since it is the law of love. Let us see to it then above everything else that we possess the love of God in our hearts, and we will be sure to do all that he teaches us to do, remembering however that love fulfills the law.

The characteristics of love are described in the thirteenth chapter of I Corinthians under the title of "the more excellent way." The Apostle is here contrasting love with spiritual gifts which the Corinthians were valuing very highly and earnestly striving after. He does not discourage their desire for these miraculous gifts, but shows them something better worth their attention. In the last verse of the preceding chapter he writes, "Covet earnestly the best gifts, and yet show I unto you a more excellent way." From this we learn that love is superior to all gifts, natural or spiritual. The ability to speak with tongues, or to interpret them, or to heal the body, or to cast out demons, will not compare with love in importance. Nor will the natural gift of eloquence, or a knowledge of Divine truth, rival love in value. Eloquence without love may please the ear and powerfully affect the emotions, but it cannot touch the heart, nor pierce the conscience. It is sounding brass and tinkling cymbal, empty of power for good. God's

word is said to be as fire and hammer to break in pieces the flinty rock. But great knowledge without love is the hammer alone without the fire, and can do no execution. Knowledge is an excellent thing in company with love, but without love it is dangerous. "Knowledge puffeth up." It produces tumefaction or swelling. It has the appearance of growth, but it is not real increase. It is an unhealthful condition and indicates the presence of a poison, namely, spiritual pride. But "charity edifieth." That is, love builds up. Love is an antidote to the poison of spiritual pride, and prevents the swelling which knowledge, by itself, produces. The first quality of love mentioned by the Apostle is longsuffering. "Love suffereth long and is kind." Nothing but love can do this. A man without love may suffer long and be silent, because he may see no help for his condition. He may exercise a great degree of patience, feeling it to be useless to resist the inevitable. He will think that what cannot be cured must be endured. But he will not feel kindly toward the author of his suffering. The iron will enter his soul producing bitterness and resentment, and if the opportunity for vengeance come, he will exact the full measure. We see this illustrated in the French Revolution.

The peasantry suffered long, and with apparent patience and resignation, the oppressions of the aristocracy. But when the opportunity came they showed a pent-up fury that was amazing, and the innocent suffered with the guilty from the blind vengeance of the mob. The Christian, like his Master who prayed for the forgiveness of His murderers, realizes that his persecutors know not what they do. He feels a pity for their blindness and malice, and feels kindly toward them whatever they may do. To be able to love our enemies is the test of Christianity. The publicans can love them who are their friends and benefactors. Only the man who has the love of God shed abroad in his heart can be kind to the unthankful and to the evil. He can bless them who curse him, and pray for those who persecute him; not pray at them as some do.

“Love envieth not.” The absence of envy is the second characteristic of love here mentioned by the Apostle. Envy springs from self-love. It is that unholy temper which causes its possessor chagrin and pain at the success or prosperity of those who excel or surpass the envious person. This cannot spring from love, as we cannot but be pleased at the prosperity of those whom we



love. It is impossible that we should envy those whom we love, and as the Christian loves all men, even his enemies, there can be no room for envy in his heart. The presence of envy is the positive proof of the absence of love therefore. What a privilege to be delivered from envy and all kindred tempers! How much they add to the misery and unhappiness of mankind. The love of God in the heart is a perfect antidote to these evils.

Love "vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." This is exactly true to nature, the nature of even natural love. Love always tends to give the possessor humble views of himself. As it tends to exaggerate the good qualities and perfections of its object, where that is possible, so by contrast the possessor sees his own merits diminished. The lover estimates himself far inferior to the object of his affections. The lover sings not his own praises, but the praises of the beloved one. This renders it easy for the one who loves to esteem others above himself. The love of the brethren enables us "in honor to prefer one another." All boastings and swellings of self-importance are entirely destroyed by love. It levels down and humbles its possessor.

Love "doth not behave itself unseemly." This is the natural consequence of humility. It is a

sense of self-importance that causes unseemly conduct. As Shakespeare has written, "But man, vain man; dressed in a little brief authority, most ignorant of what he is most assured, cuts such fantastic tricks before high heaven as makes the angels weep." There is nothing equal to love for toning down the behavior, softening the manners, and moderating the conduct. It makes its possessor considerate of others, affable, and courteous. It makes men gentle, and therefore produces real gentlemen. That which is called good manners in polite society is generally but the imitation of the effects of love in the heart.

Love "seeketh not her own." In other words, love is not selfish. This fact is almost self-evident. Love is not self-seeking, but seeks the welfare of the object beloved. This is so generally recognized as a fact that it will be unnecessary to dwell upon it, and I will proceed at once to the application. If I love God, then I will be solicitous for His glory rather than for my own pleasure. To know that I please Him will afford more pleasure than to know that He blesses me. To know that I grieve Him will cause me more pain than His chastisements, though they are not joyous. This view does not force us to the Hopkinsian theory

of disinterested benevolence which carries us to unwarranted extremes. It is not necessary that I should be willing to be damned for the glory of God, since I am taught that this is not His will; that He is not willing that any should perish. And besides God will be much more glorified by my salvation than by my destruction. But if I love God, that which concerns Him will be more dear to me than those things which concern myself only. My first thought and concern will be for God's glory rather than for my own advantage. Instead of inquiring what shall I have therefore, I will ask:

"What can I do my God to love,  
My loving God to praise?"

Selfishness makes demands; love gives, nor does it give grudgingly nor of necessity, but cheerfully and freely. Self-examination will enable us to ascertain by which motive we are actuated in our religious life.

Love "is not provoked." The authorized version supplies the word "easily," which the new translation properly leaves out, as not being in the original Greek. This passage is somewhat obscure and is, I think, usually misunderstood. It is generally explained to mean that love is not roused to irritability or anger. But this construction is

purely gratuitous. It is founded on the common use of the term "provoke," meaning to incite to anger. But this use of the word is vulgar or colloquial and is not literal nor sanctioned by the best writers or speakers. The word "provoke" is of Latin origin, and is composed of the prefix "pro" meaning "for, forth, or forward," and the verb "vocare," to call; and means simply "to call forth." There is no intimation in the word itself as to the nature of that which is called forth. It may be a smile or a frown, laughter or tears, praise or blame, "love and good works" or hatred and evil-doing. In plain English the statement is that "love is not called forth." To say that it means "not incited to anger," is to pass off our own notions or imagination as the words of the Apostle or of the Holy Spirit. The Apostle simply declares that love is not called forth. Taking Him to mean what he says, no more, no less, it is our business to inquire what He means by the declaration. He does not say that love *cannot* be provoked, for it can be. "We love him because he first loved us." Love provokes love. When the Apostle exhorts us to "provoke one another to love and good works," he means that by manifestations of love we should incite others to like

practices. We are to understand the statement of the text then in a general sense and not in a universal sense, as having no exceptions. In general, love is not provoked. That is to say, the moving cause of love is not usually found in the object loved, but in the person who loves. In other words, love is spontaneous and is not evoked. This is evidently true of God's love for sinners. There was no moral quality in the sinner to provoke love; God loves the sinner because of what He is, and not because of what the sinner is. His love is not provoked. In like manner the Christian loves all men, not because they are generally lovable, but because it is the nature of love in his heart to flow out toward them. His love is not provoked. If we do not love men until they provoke it, we will love very few. Though love is spontaneous, it is not blind nor indiscriminating. All are not loved alike. God loves all mankind, but their characters determine the degree and kind of love that they receive. His obedient children are loved with a peculiar love differing much from that which impenitent sinners receive. So also Christians do not love all alike. They love their enemies, but not as they love their neighbors. They love their neighbors, those who are kindly disposed toward

them, as they love themselves. But their brethren are loved in a still higher sense, and with greater intensity. They prefer them before themselves, and are ready, if need be, to lay down their lives for the brethren. This is the highest degree of which love is capable. And it is capable of it only because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart. Love, then, generally speaking, is not provoked, but flows out as from a spring, whose fountainhead is in the skies.

Love "rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." By iniquity is meant that which is not right or equal. Error will not harmonize with error. To speak figuratively, the lines of error do not run parallel to each other. They conflict and cross one another. This is not true of the truth. No one truth ever contradicts any other truth. The lines of truth are equal and parallel. Consequently in truth there is no confusion. Truth always proceeds in right, or straight lines. It does not turn aside for any man's feelings or prejudices. It will run across the most cherished opinions and the most darling lusts. It is uncompromising and unrelenting. Only those can rejoice in the truth who are willing to get into harmony with it; in line with it, so to speak. This most men are not

willing to do. Therefore they hate the truth and prefer error and falsehood which will accommodate themselves to their wishes. Love rejoices in the truth because it wishes to be in harmony with God, the Author of truth. If truth is painful to us, it is because we are not in line with it. And as truth is immutable and must at last prevail, it is the part of wisdom for us to get into harmony with it. To love God is to love the truth. Such one must therefore rejoice in the truth.

"Love thinketh no evil." And "love beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." The unsuspecting nature of love is referred to in the expression "thinketh no evil." Love is always disposed to think well of its objects. If we love others, we naturally put the best construction upon their conduct. Love is expert at finding excuses. It is not on the lookout for evil developments. When evil is spoken of others, it never exclaims, "I told you so." It is surprised and pained. Love is no gossip or scandal-monger. In harmony with this quality is love's credulousness. "Love believeth all things," that is, all good things. It is easy and natural for love to believe good of others. It believes evil of them only because it must. Because love is credulous



it is liable to be imposed upon, and it needs the warning to "beware of men." Love is not blind; it has clear vision. It does not see evil because it is not looking for it, and does not wish to see it. If I love a man I will believe good of him so long as I can. I will not suspect his motives until facts force me to do so. But love does not ignore facts. It does not call black, white nor evil, good. It thinks evil of another only on plain undeniable evidence, but it does not ignore such evidence. To do so would be folly and weakness. But even when the facts are against another, love does not give him up. It still "hopeth all things." It hopes for better things, and hoping it patiently waits. But when there seems to be no longer room for hope, it still bears and endures. Though despairing, it has no animadversions to make, no faults to find, no insult to offer. It silently endures its disappointment.

"Love never faileth. But whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child I spake as a child, I

understood as a child, I thought as a child, but when I became a man I put away childish things. For now we see as in a glass, darkly, but then, face to face. Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as I also am known." In this passage the Apostle shows the superiority of love by contrasting it with those gifts which the Corinthians so highly valued. Love is eternal, while these gifts are temporal and soon to pass away. But whether there be prophecies, they shall fail. By prophecies, as I have shown in other places, is meant any speaking under the influence or inspiration of the Holy Spirit. It might be translated "preaching." These belong to this stage of existence and have no place in the future ages. Though of great value now, prophetic gifts will soon be of no use. "Whether there be tongues, they shall cease." By "tongues" here is meant different languages. The gift of tongues does not seem to have been given for any practical purpose. The Apostle declares that tongues were for a sign; not to enable the speaker to address others in language they could understand, but generally the contrary. Those having the gift of tongues generally spoke in unknown languages, and had to have interpreters. This gift long ago ceased in the church, for what reason I am not prepared to say. "Whether there

be knowledge, it shall vanish away." We are not left to conjecture as to the reason for the failure of knowledge. "For we know in part and prophesy in part." Our knowledge being partial and imperfect, it will be of no value when perfect knowledge is enjoyed. The Apostle compares the present state of our knowledge with that enjoyed in our future state of existence, and illustrates the difference in two ways. One is the illustration of the mirror. "Now we see as in a mirror, darkly." We cannot see truth directly, but only its image. We can see but one side of it at a time as in a mirror. This can give us but an imperfect knowledge of it. He also uses the illustration of the child and the man. We are but children here, but we shall be men after awhile, in the next age. As the imperfect knowledge of the child is thrown aside as he approaches manhood, so all our knowledge here gained at the expense of so much time and labor will become entirely valueless by the perfect information possessed in a future state of existence. Men imagine themselves very knowing, and pride themselves upon their scientific discoveries. How childish and foolish will their theories appear in the eternal world. How appropriate the injunction, "Let not the wise man glory in his

wisdom." It will soon be shown to be a tissue of distorted facts, illogical conclusions, and impossible theories. The science of the next age will show that what is now called by that name is "science falsely so called." When "that which is perfect is come," when after the redemption of the body we shall possess physical and mental perfection, knowledge will be acquired with ease and accuracy. Instead of arriving at truth by a labored process of reasoning, we shall "know as we are known." We shall see truth face to face. Intuition will take the place of logical deduction, and certainty the place of doubt. With a perfect brain as an instrument of mental action, all men will stand on an equal footing. The inequalities of the present life will disappear. No one will possess any advantage, no one be handicapped in the race. In the inequalities of this life God acts as a Sovereign in parceling them out, and who shall say to Him, "What doest thou?" One man is born strong and healthy, another weak and puny. One with a vigorous and active brain, another with a brain weak and sluggish. One is surrounded with all the advantages which wealth and culture can afford, another is hampered by poverty and ignorance. But these differences are but temporary and the results of

the fall of man. The differences in men themselves, aside from difference of circumstances, is in the physical man alone. The physical results of the first sin fall unequally upon men. Some are idiotic, some have powerful brains capable of great improvement and education. Mentally, the two are equal: that is, the difference is not in the immaterial principle, but in the vehicle through which the mind acts. But in the resurrection the idiot and the savant will be mental equals. Nor will the present advantages of the philosopher avail him anything in the next age. His imperfect knowledge will be discarded when that which is perfect is come. Every man will be a normal human being, no more, no less. I speak of the resurrection of the just. These apparent partialities will disappear forever. I speak only of what men will be, not what they will receive. In these things they will differ as their faithfulness and responsibilities differ. In this respect "one star will excel another star in glory." All the stores of present knowledge then will disappear when we reach the perfect state, when we become perfect human beings, as the angels are perfect in their sphere. But though all present human knowledge shall vanish away, love will continue unchangeably

the same. In this its great superiority appears. These gifts are for a brief period. Love is eternal.

“And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three. But the greatest of these is charity.” Herein Love is declared to be superior, not only to these temporary spiritual gifts, but also to faith and hope. In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews faith is greatly eulogized, but love is here declared its superior. This is not, as some suppose, because they too shall cease, as the poet declares:—

“When faith is sweetly lost in sight,  
And hope in full supreme delight.”

It is not probable that either faith or hope shall be strangers to the next age, or to any succeeding ages. The Apostle here, on the contrary, classes them among the things that abide. Supreme felicity will certainly not wholly displace hope. There will still be a looking forward to the continuance of this state of happiness. “Hope will spring eternal in the human breast,” though the present leaves nothing more to be desired. Faith as a condition of favor with God, it is true, will no longer exist. Nor will faith supply the place of knowledge as it does now. But faith, in the sense of reliance upon God, and a sure trust in His goodness, will certainly endure. But though faith and

hope will not cease to exist, they there, as now, will but emphasize and mark the finite limitations of redeemed humanity. These but manifest our unlikeness to God. On the other hand, love is the nature of Deity. The man who loves is like God. Love is God's image and likeness. In trusting and hoping we show our unlikeness to God, but in loving we show our likeness to Him. Love shows our unity of nature with God; in it we are made "partakers of the Divine nature." In this respect then love is superior to faith and hope. "The greatest of these is love."

Love is equally adapted to all ages and all dispensations. Age may succeed age, be rolled up as a scroll and be placed among the dusty records of the past, but love will remain unchanged and unchangeable, because it is Divine. No mark of age will mar its eternal youth and beauty; for God himself is love.

Love is the strongest moral force in the universe. It bears a similar relation to the spiritual world as gravitation has in the material universe. All pure intelligences are kept by love in their respective spheres, and order and harmony is preserved. It unites them together and controls their mutual relations, and binds them to God, the com-



mon center from whom they derive their happiness. No one is entirely lost to hope, when he can be touched by love. In this capability is found the salvability of the lost human race. Without it their case would be as hopeless as that of the demons. The lost sinner may be unmoved by threats of vengeance, and by the menaces of offended justice, as well as by hope of happiness and of future reward. But a sense of God's love when first realized will penetrate and rouse him. He will find himself moved with a desire to reciprocate that love. If this desire be yielded to, he will be brought to God and saved. But if resisted he will be hardened. If persistently and stubbornly resisted, he will gradually become insensible to the influence of Divine love, and sink into a spiritual stupor, which precedes and foretells the second death. He becomes "twice dead; plucked up by the roots." His case has now become as hopeless as that of the demons themselves. When love fails to rouse and save, there is no other power that can speak life into the dead. No purgatorial fires can benefit him who has successfully resisted Infinite Love. He is irretrievably lost. Being uninfluenced by the power of spiritual gravity, he is like a comet, which has lost its orbit,

a wandering star for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

The Lord help you and me, while we feel the drawings of Divine Love to yield to its influences and be saved.

“O, may His love our hearts constrain,  
Nor suffer Him to die in vain.”

## THE TWO COVENANTS

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IN THAT he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.—Heb. viii : 13.

RIGHTLY dividing the word of truth.—II Tim. ii : 15.

THE subject of the nature and relations of the two covenants or dispensations, the Jewish and the Christian, is one of interest as well as of practical importance. The want of a clear understanding of these matters has led to great confusion of ideas and a resultant lowering of the standard of Christian living. The prevailing ignorance upon this subject is not chargeable to a want of plain teaching in the Scriptures upon these points, but to want of spiritual perception on the part of religious teachers. There are many truths lying right on the surface of God's Word that have escaped their notice. A cut-and-dried theology is much to be blamed for a slowness to learn the teachings of the Scriptures, it is admitted, but the great hindrance to learning is disobedience. It is only those who are willing to do God's will who

shall know of the doctrine or teachings of Christ. To the disobedient He is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. It was never intended that those who would not obey God should understand His words. Because there is so much unwillingness to obey God, there is so much ignorance of spiritual things among modern Christians, so called. It may be truly said of them, notwithstanding their Chautauqua circles, their Bible schools, and theological seminaries, "Ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." In Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. To get at these treasures we must get into Christ. This can only be done by entire self-abandonment, which few are willing to make. The place of this self-denial cannot be supplied by learning or research. These keys will not unlock the treasure house of wisdom. The truth on this subject is not new, but seems so because generally overlooked or ignored.

The word "covenant" is a translation of the Greek word "diathēkē" and is sometimes translated "testament" and at other times "covenant." The two parts of the Bible are usually called the Old Testament and the New Testament. But they can just as properly be called the Old and New

Covenants. There is quite a difference in the meaning of the two words however. A testament is a will which takes effect after the testator's death. A covenant is a contract entered into by two different persons or parties. It is declared in Heb. ix : 16, "For where a testament is there must also of necessity be the death of the testator." Now in the case of the Old Testament there is no death of any testator; so it would more consistently be called the "Old Covenant." This verse in Hebrews would probably more properly be translated thus: "For where a covenant is there must also of necessity be the death of the victim." The writer here evidently refers to the ancient form of making covenants or contracts. A victim was slain and divided into two equal parts, the parties to the contract took their stand between the two divided parts of the victim, and a third party, the witness or mediator, took the blood of the victim, and applied it to each of the principals of the covenant. The contract was not binding until the victim was slain. The context shows this to be the writer's meaning, since he goes on to show that in the case of the Old Covenant the victims were slain, and that the Mediator, Moses, took the blood with scarlet wool and hyssop and sprinkled the book

and all the people. The other party, of course, could not be sprinkled with the blood.

In the case of the New Covenant, Christ is first the victim, and after His resurrection and ascension to Heaven, He became our Mediator and High Priest; having entered not the holy places made with hands, but into heaven itself there to appear in our behalf. We have come to "Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than that of Abel."

God has then made two distinct covenants with two distinct peoples or churches; Abraham representing both, the one his natural, the other his spiritual seed. These, the two churches, are plainly taught to be distinct and separate institutions. How the notion of their identity originated, I am at a loss to conjecture. And yet all pædo-baptist sects hold to that identity, and base upon its existence the doctrine of Infant church membership. The doctrine and this fact upon which it is based are both erroneous. Each church is a nation, the one by natural descent from Abraham, membership being based upon the circumstance of natural birth; the other nation being born, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man,

but of God." The Israelites were always one nation or people; but St. Peter declares of the Christian nation, that it was originally not "a people," but it is now the people of God. As the one nation was originally one by natural birth, and the other became one only by a second birth, they cannot be the same people. Christ tells the Jews, in the parable of the vineyard, that the kingdom should be taken from them and given to a nation which should bring forth the fruits thereof, which they did not do. The nation to whom the kingdom is given must be a different one from the nation from whom it is taken. One was the Jewish church, the other is the Church of Christ. If the two churches were identical, then membership in one would constitute membership in the other. So all Jews would have been, *ipso facto*, members of the church of Christ, which they never were. The burden of proof rests upon those who hold to the identity of the two institutions.

Again we are told in Heb. xii: 18-22, "But ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, etc. But ye are come unto Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the general assembly and church of the firstborn." In this passage the



two churches are evidently meant. The Jewish church represented by Mt. Sinai, the Christian church by Mount Zion. In fact we are told that Mount Zion is "the church of the firstborn and the heavenly Jerusalem." In another place St. Paul tells us that "Jerusalem which is above is free and the mother of us all," the Jerusalem which now is, being in bondage. These two institutions can no more be identical than were Mounts Sinai and Zion. In another place it is said, "Rejoice thou barren that bearest not, break forth into singing thou that travailest not, for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath a husband." The former, represented by barren Sarah, is the church of Christ; the latter, represented by the fertile Hagar, is the Jewish church. They can no more be the same institution than Sarah and Hagar were the same woman. But it is unnecessary to multiply quotations to substantiate the point. It is clearly, sufficiently established.

The difference in nature of the two churches shows this distinctness. The covenant made with the Israelites had no mention made of any other world than this. Long life was promised, but it was to be enjoyed in the land given to them. Health was promised, but it was health of body,

not of soul. Riches, but they were worldly possessions, and not spiritual wealth. Liberty, but it was freedom from political oppression and out of the hands of their mortal enemies, not liberty from sin. Punishment for disobedience was threatened, but the severest penalty was physical death. "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses," but a much sorer punishment awaits those who trample under foot the Son of God, and count the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified an unholy thing, and do despite unto the Spirit of Grace. In the Old Covenant no future world is mentioned, no promise of future reward is made, nor is any future punishment threatened. Jesus Christ brought life and immortality to light in the Gospel. The Old Covenant had nothing whatever to do with the future state of those under it. Nor did moral character affect their right to membership in the Jewish church. If a man was born a Jew and circumcised, he was in the covenant. He might be guilty of murder, adultery, and polygamy as was King David, and still remain in the covenant. Like Joab, he might kill his neighbor in cold blood, without cutting himself off from God's people. But every man child not circumcised was cut

off from God's people. The carnal rite of circumcision had more importance in determining his relation to the covenant than the highest virtues or the vilest crimes. The fact that moral character was not considered in the condition of membership in the Jewish church, shows the nature of that church and the religion established. It was clearly external and ceremonial. It consisted of "meats and drinks and divers washings and carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation." Nothing more. There was not one spiritual item in their religion. This is a fact generally lost sight of. The Old Covenant required works; their obedience was outward and not of the heart. The terms of the covenant required not faith, but external obedience to law. The law said "He that doeth these things shall live by them." The attempt to mix in the religion of the heart with such a system is absurd. The Jewish religion was wholly carnal without any mixture of spirituality. But it may be asked, "Were there not some persons living previous to the Christian age who had faith?" I answer, certainly there were. But the Old Covenant had nothing to do with their faith. From righteous Abel to Simeon, there were persons who had faith. But this faith made them minor

heirs under the New Covenant to be established later. But while minor heirs and until the promised Seed came to whom the promise was made, they were under the bondage of law and "differed nothing from a servant" and were treated just as the spiritual descendant of Hagar the bondwoman, though by faith they were truly heirs of the Free Woman. Their faith had nothing to do with their relation to the Old Covenant. They were just as truly members of the Jewish church without faith. Before the coming of Christ, these heirs of salvation were kept under bondage to the "rudiments of the world," differing nothing from slaves "until the time appointed of the Father."

It was these minor heirs under the New Covenant, who "through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, put to flight the armies of the aliens." But it was by faith which made them the spiritual children of Abraham that they did these wonders. But it was as Abraham's natural seed that they were heirs under the Old Covenant. These believers were minor heirs, as I have shown elsewhere, because

they had not yet obtained the salvation promised to those having faith. "They without us could not be made perfect." As heirs under the Old Covenant they had portions of the promised land allotted them, and were under the especial care and tutelage of Jehovah. In a sense they were His people, His church. They entered into covenant with him first at Sinai, amid the most terrifying displays of God's power. The sights were so terrible that even Moses was exceedingly afraid and quaked with fright. Under such circumstances, and amid such surroundings, not much freedom of action was possible. To use a common phrase, "They were scared into their religion." The principal motive of their service was fear. This was seconded by hope of temporal rewards. They were "uncircumcised in heart and ears," as Stephen charges. "The whole house of Israel was uncircumcised in heart." They were natural men moved by fear to take upon themselves vows and obligations which they were quick to disregard. When God smote them, then they feared Him, but their goodness was like the early cloud and like the morning dew. They were bent on backsliding. They never, during their whole history, for any great length of time, kept the vows they had made.

Because they continued not in His covenant, God regarded them not. "They did always err in their heart," never having had any real spirit of obedience. When they remembered that "God was their Rock, and the High God their salvation," even then they "lied unto him with their tongues," and were not faithful to their covenant. We wonder sometimes at God's severity toward His ancient people. But nothing but the most heroic treatment would keep them within bounds. They were called out from among the nations and made the depository of revealed truths not for their own good alone, but for the good of the world at large. They had also the "lively oracles" through whom God communicated with men. The High-Priest wearing the Ephod was an oracle. Through him God answered by Urim and Thummim. But the prophets whom God raised up and sent to His people were the most common oracles. Through them God communicated His will to His chosen. They had many advantages, as St. Paul shows, but the oracles of God constituted their chief advantage. But all their superior opportunities made them, in general, more supercilious, trusting in themselves that they were righteous, and despising others. In vain did they receive line upon line, and precept

upon precept; they still failed to be instructed. In vain were they disciplined until Jehovah inquires, Why should ye be stricken any more? The whole head is sick and the whole heart faint. From the crown of the head to the feet there was no soundness, but wounds and bruises, and putrefying sores. They were incorrigible. In spite of fifteen hundred years of faithful dealing, they still resisted the Holy Ghost and when Christ came unto His own He found them unwilling to receive Him, and they ended in rejecting their Messiah and crucifying their King and brought down upon themselves the vengeance of Heaven of which the Roman soldiers under Titus and Vespasian were the executors who took and destroyed the Holy City and laid it in ruins, and sold them into slavery until the slave markets of the world were glutted. Such was God's ancient people. Their birth a natural one, their country of this world; their righteousness ceremonial; their service a round of mere outward forms and carnal ordinances; their worship external ceremonies, noise of trumpets, making of prayers, an observance of days and weeks and times and seasons. It was a fleshly church without any spiritual characteristics. The Covenant made with them respected this world only. How different the Church of Christ, the



Church of the New Covenant! Of her members it may be said, their birth is from above; their righteousness inward holiness; their service, the service of love; their worship in Spirit and in truth, without limitation of time or place. Their country is a heavenly one to which they are hastening. Christ's church is Jerusalem which is above, which is free. She has heavenly ways. There is nothing fleshly about her. "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." The church of the New Covenant is as free from anything fleshly as the Old Covenant church was free from anything spiritual. God's ancient people were stiff-necked and disobedient. They were unlike Him in their natures and so erred in their hearts. God's present people is a willing people in this the day of God's power. They love God and therefore will do His will. Having pure hearts they see God and their ears are open to instruction. His commandments, instead of being a yoke of bondage, are to them a law of liberty. "His commandments are not grievous." His yoke is easy and His burden is light and they find rest to their souls. They are the nation which brings forth the fruits in their seasons. Those fruits are love, peace, joy, long-

suffering, godliness, meekness, faith, temperance, etc., against which there is no law. They not only love God and therefore keep His commandments, but they love their neighbors as themselves. The righteousness of the law which is love to God and men, is fulfilled in them who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. They have the mind of Christ and are made partakers of the Divine nature. By the one Spirit they are baptized into the one body and all drink into one Spirit. They pray in the Spirit, they sing in the Spirit, they walk in the Spirit. Thus they are as different from the former church as Heaven is different from earth. One special feature of the Jewish church was its instability and inconstancy. She was said to be bent on backsliding. Said the prophet, "Ephraim is a backsliding heifer." For this reason she is fitly represented by the moon which constantly waxes and wanes. But the church of Christ, represented by the woman clothed with the sun, has the moon under her feet. The Sun, on the other hand, is the emblem of the New Covenant church, since, like him, she is constant and stable. There is not one word said about the backsliding of Christ's church. The Jewish church is continually charged with being an unfaithful spouse, guilty of

idolatrous adulteries. The church of Christ is, on the other hand, described as a chaste virgin, true to her espousals and faithfully waiting for the marriage feast. There is nothing said concerning her backslidings. God, under the Old Covenant, was truly "married to the backslider," but not now. Now it is said, "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." Now God expects better things, even things accompanying salvation. The reason God gives for making a New Covenant with a new Israel is, "They continued not in my covenant and I regarded them not, saith the Lord." Not much would be gained by entering into a covenant with another people equally unreliable and inconstant. I know this is often represented to be what God has done, but the charge is a libel on His wisdom, and on the church which is sanctified with His blood. God has repudiated His covenant with backsliders, and has warned His people saying, "Beware lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the Living God." Of those who fall away or apostatize it is said, "It is impossible to renew them unto repentance. Seeing they have crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." For such there "remaineth no more sacrifice for

sin." They have put away the only sacrifice, the one sacrifice for sin, and there remaineth for them nothing but a certain fearful looking for of judgment. It is true that among nominal Christians, there is much the same state of things as existed among the Jews anciently. But such are not under the New Covenant. They have never come out from among unbelievers, touching not the unclean, that God might receive them, and be a Father unto them, and that they might be His sons and daughters. They have never really tasted of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, and been made partakers of the Holy Ghost. Their risings and fallings, their lapses and reclamations amount to nothing. They are not crucified at all. It is true that men may fall away from Christ, but when they do so they fall finally. They may draw back, but they draw back to perdition. This result is reached by willful sin only: There is a "sin not unto death," which is fallen into through deception or through surprise which, when seen, is repudiated. But to the man who has tasted of the saving grace of God, to deliberately and knowingly sin against God, is to crucify Christ afresh and to trample on the blood of the covenant. He sins against the Holy Ghost, having

done despite unto the Spirit of Grace. The common notion of the triviality of backsliding is a very erroneous and dangerous one. In this respect the church of Christ differs from the Jewish church in *toto genere*. It is not a backsliding church. The Old Covenant was a temporary arrangement, intervening between the promise made to Abraham and the coming of Christ, the promised Seed. It was intended to instruct and prepare its subjects for the coming of the promised Messiah. St. Paul tells us that the law entered that the offense might abound. It was never intended to save men from sin under its provision. It is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins. But its onerous rites and its scrupulous provisions against ceremonial defilement, and the cost and inconvenience of obtaining ceremonial cleansing, were intended to impress upon the Jew the nature of sin and its danger to the soul. It was a law of bondage, while the Gospel is a law of liberty. Peter declares it was a yoke which neither they nor their fathers could bear. It was a dispensation of condemnation as contrasted with the present dispensation of justification. It brought death, while the Gospel brings life and immortality. "The law worketh wrath;" the Gospel brings peace and good-will.

But though the two covenants are so unlike and diverse, they are closely related to each other. They stand to each other in the relation of type and antetype. It is because of this fact that the Old Covenant has an interest for us. Its requirements lay no obligations upon us. "We are dead to the law by the body of Christ." Its sacrifices, its Sabbaths, its new moons and solemn feasts, its baptisms, its distinction of clean and unclean meats, have no more to do with us than if they had never existed. We are to allow no man to judge us by such rules. "Let no man judge you with respect to meats and drinks, the new moon and the Sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come." All these things were nailed to Christ's cross as being among the handwriting of ordinances which were against us, which were contrary to us. But while the Old Covenant in none of its requirements has any demands upon us, it still has many lessons for us. "Whatever was written aforetime was written for our learning." We may derive much instruction from the history of God's dealings with his people. The whole matter is a parable, a figure, an allegory. The New Testament writers, by their application of passages quoted from the Old Testament, show many things to be figurative

which we should scarcely suspect to be so. The study of the Old Testament to discern its figurative meaning and its spiritual application is very interesting and profitable.

Before proceeding to the consideration of the next point, I will add an explanation to prevent any misconception. When we speak of the Kingdom being taken from the Jews, it is not meant that they are denied membership in the new kingdom, or that the new church is exclusively a Gentile church. It is meant only that the Jews as a nation are deprived of those exclusive and peculiar privileges which they enjoyed under the law. The kingdom is taken from them as a nation and given to them as individuals on exactly the same conditions as to others. They have the same rights and privileges as all others and no more. The middle wall of partition is broken down to make of twain one new man so making peace. It is true that the Jew had the first offer of Gospel privileges. They were to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. But otherwise in Christ, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female, but all are one in Christ Jesus." This equality with those whom they had been taught to consider as dogs and outcasts offended them.



Salvation by faith without the works of the law stumbled them. "They stumbled at that stumbling-stone." Like the elder brother of the prodigal, they refused to come into the feast at which the prodigal was admitted on equal terms. The mass of the nation became obdurate and have remained so until the present day.

But little has been written upon this important subject, and that in a desultory manner. Nor will there be space within the limits of the sermon to do them justice. But I will do what I can to make clear this relation between the two covenants. I repeat then, that the two covenants stand to each other in the relation of type and antetype. The first wholly natural, the second wholly spiritual. The call to Abram is a type of the call to spiritual life. As he in a natural sense forsook home and friends to go to a strange and unknown land, so we are commanded in a spiritual sense to forsake all that we have to become Disciples of Christ. Abram went out, not knowing whither he went, to a land to be shown him afterward. So—

"His call we obey like Abram of old;  
We know not our way, but faith makes us bold."

His call was a Divine call and a personal one. So must ours be. By faith he went out, not

knowing whither he went. So by faith we entrust our all to God's care and providence. His sojourn in the promised land as in a strange country, having no ownership in it, typifies our sojourn upon the earth as pilgrims and foreigners, a land which we shall inherit. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." There were dwellers in Canaan when Abraham was there, but they were not heirs of the land. They held it by no Divine title. So it is now on this earth. His dwelling in tents in a land of walled towns, with Isaac and Jacob, fellow-heirs of the promise, represents the spiritual sojourn of Christians in this world as strangers and outcasts, seeking a heavenly country. His barren wife Sarah is a type of the church of Christ, while his fertile concubine, Hagar, stands for the Mosaic church, and all others who like them are born only after the flesh. Ishmael and Isaac are also types, the former, of spiritual bondage, the latter, of spiritual liberty, according to the Apostle Paul. All who are slaves to sin and fear are the spiritual children of Hagar. Those who are freed from sin and the fear of death are the children of Sarah, the freewoman, and heirs of all the promises. Most religious people at the present are the spiritual descendants of Hagar, as were the Jews

under the Old Covenant. God's real people are children of promise as was Isaac, and are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. The Old Covenant left men slaves, the New Covenant makes men free. The Old Covenant church was begun in the family of Abraham when he received the rite of circumcision, but was completed in the time of the exodus under Moses. Jacob and Esau are also types; the one of profane, the other of spiritual persons. Jacob's course is especially typical, but space would fail to follow the figure throughout. The land of Canaan is not only a type of the redeemed earth which the saints shall inherit, but also of the spiritual rest enjoyed by the people of God in this life. Joshua's bringing the Israelites into the promised land, according to Hebrew iv, typifies the spiritual rest, the real Sabbath, enjoyed by the people of God under the New Covenant. The bondage in Egypt of the Israelites typifies bondage to sin. The passage of the Red Sea typifies the new birth, the deliverance of the Israelites represents deliverance from the power of sin and Satan; the rejoicing, the joy of salvation. The song they sang, the song of Moses typifies the Song of Redemption, the Song of the Lamb. The journeyings in the wilderness, the forty years

wanderings, are used by the Apostle Paul to represent the experience of God's people in this world. The baptism in the Red Sea typifies that baptism which brings us into Christ. They were all baptized into Moses; we are baptized into Christ. The manna they ate and the water they drank both typified the Bread and Water of life. The giving of the law at Sinai and the covenant there entered into by the Israelites is typical of the new law and the New Covenant. The Sabbath then instituted was a type or shadow, as St. Paul declares. Col. ii: 16, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days; which are all shadows of things to come." The sacrifices were all of them types of the one great sacrifice, the Lord Jesus Christ who offered himself without spot to God. The various washings and cleansings were all types of the washing of regeneration, even the renewing of the Holy Ghost. The distinction of clean and unclean meats was typical, indicating that truth and falsehood may very nearly resemble each other, but while the one is wholesome, the other is poison, to the soul; and that there are certain marks by which they may be distinguished. The prohibition of mixture in seeds and in the

material of garments, and even of working animals, all testify to God's abhorrence of the mixture of truth and falsehood; of the outward yoking of believer and unbeliever. The ceremonial defilement of the touch of a dead body or any part of it testifies to the pollution of the soul through spiritual contact with sinners. "Can we touch pitch and not be defiled?" "Evil communications corrupt good manners." The creation of the tabernacle in the wilderness and the service therein are all very significant. This tabernacle was afterward established upon Mount Zion by King David and is the type of the militant church of Christ; as the temple built by Solomon is a type of the triumphant and glorified church. David being a man of war was not allowed to build this temple, much as he desired to do so. But Solomon being a man of peace, representing Christ reigning over a subdued earth, was commissioned to build a house for God. In the Acts of the Apostles, the "rebuilding of the tabernacle of David which was fallen down" is applied to the founding of the church of Christ, thus showing that the tabernacle is a type of this church. The Holy place represents the church on earth, the Holy of Holies represents Heaven. The curtain or vail separating

the two represents the fact that the way into the Holiest was not yet made manifest; that under the Old Covenant a fitness for service in the Holy place did not fit one for entrance into the Holiest. The High Priest alone was permitted to enter the Holy of Holies once a year with fear and trembling to make atonement for his own sins and the sins of the people. But when Christ died, the vail was rent in twain, showing that since our High Priest had entered the antetypical Holy of Holies, that is Heaven itself, with His own blood as an offering for sin, the separation between Heaven and earth had disappeared, and that to enter the church was to be fitted for Heaven. The Holy of Holies contained the Ark of the Covenant with the mercy seat overlaid with gold. Only the High Priest could approach that mercy seat under the Old Covenant, but now any believer is encouraged to come to the throne of grace with boldness, that he may obtain mercy. The Ark of the Covenant is itself a type of a child of God. The three things contained in the ark are types of spiritual things found in the heart of the Christian. The book of the law represents the law written in the heart. The pot of manna is Christ the bread of life formed within the hope of glory. The rod of Aaron that

budded though separated from its parent stem represents the miraculous life existing in every believer. "He that hath the Son hath life." "He that believeth has everlasting life." The capture of the ark by the Philistines, the news of which, and the loss of his two sons, caused the death of the High Priest Eli, and gave the name of Ichabod to his newly born grandson; the captivity of the ark, its journeyings from city to city, with the consequences to its captors and their idols; their sending it back to Judea, and the death of those who presumptuously looked into it; its stay in the house of Abinadab for twenty years; David's attempt to remove it by unlawfully placing it upon a cart; the fate of Uzzah for touching the ark to steady it, which was unlawful; David's fear and the stay of the ark for three months in the house of Obed Edom, and David's final removal of the ark to the city of David, where he incurred the ridicule of his wife, the daughter of Saul, for dancing before the ark; all these things are very interesting and significant, but cannot be considered at length in this place.

The reigns of Saul and David, the latter representing the true, the former the apostate, church, furnish much instruction to the spiritual reader and



student. Jonathan's vacillation between the two, his heart with David, his interest with Saul, and the final result of it all, teaches an impressive lesson to those who play that part. "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan." The temple at Jerusalem, in so far as it was the dwelling-place of Jehovah, is a type of Christ's body, and of the body of the Christian. Jesus said, "Destroy this temple, and I will build it again in three days." He here makes the temple the type of His body. The Apostle says, "Know ye not that your bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost?" Here each believer's body is the antetype of the temple at Jerusalem. Thus I might go on indefinitely multiplying types, but probably enough has been said to show how full the Old Covenant history is of types, and there is danger of becoming tiresome to the reader.

The Old Covenant was wholly symbolical in its nature. There was nothing spiritual in the religion it taught and inculcated. This is clearly stated in Heb. ix: 9, 10: "Which was a figure for the time then present; in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make them that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience. Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings [baptisms], and carnal or-

dinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation." It stood in meats and drinks, etc., and in them alone. These were the whole of the religion under that covenant. But we are told by the Apostle Paul that, "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Herein we see the distinction of the two covenants. One is wholly without meat and drink, the other consists wholly of these things. One is wholly typical, the other wholly antetypical. One is wholly carnal, the other is wholly spiritual. One is the religion of outward forms and ceremonies, the other is the religion of the heart. In the one, outward ordinances, rites, and observances were everything; in the other they are nothing. The one was temporary, the other is eternal. "And this word, but once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made; that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and Godly fear."—Heb. xii: 27, 28. The shaking of earth and also heaven as promised in the preceding verse signifies the change of dispensations or covenants. The things that could be

shaken all belonged to the former dispensation. All types, shadows, and emblems are of this nature, and they are all removed. Only those things which cannot be shaken remain, and they are eternal. We have received a kingdom which cannot be moved, because it consists of eternal verities. There is nothing shadowy or temporary in it, or belonging to it, as a part of it. As the kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, he who has these has the whole kingdom of God. The kingdom of God, the New Covenant religion, is wholly spiritual without any mixture of carnal rites. This is a fact which is generally lost sight of, and hence the sad corruption of the religion of Jesus. This mixture began when those teachers went down from Jerusalem and taught the Gentile converts that they must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses in order to be saved, and it has continued ever since. The attempt to combine a spiritual and a carnal religion must always prove disastrous to the former. Men are prone to cling to outward things, and to attach importance to them to the neglect of that which is purely spiritual, and the attempt to combine the two will inevitably result in the neglect of that which is spiritual. In their solicitude to properly tithe

mint, anise, and cummin, they will pass over judgment and the love of God. The ancient Jew was a shadow, a type, the real Jew is the Christian believer. "He is not a Jew which is one outwardly." Circumcision in the flesh was also a type; the real circumcision is that of the heart, in the purification of the moral nature. "Neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh." The baptisms with water were all types; the real baptism is that of the Holy Spirit, "the washing of regeneration even the renewing of the Holy Ghost." The passover supper of bread and wine was a shadow. Christ is our Passover who is sacrificed for us, and He is eaten only by faith and in a spiritual sense alone. All types and shadows belong to the dispensation of the same nature. They are things that can be shaken, arbitrarily imposed on men until the time of reformation, but no longer. The things that can be shaken are then removed, that the things which cannot be shaken alone may remain. We have received a kingdom which cannot be moved, because it contains nothing but spiritual and eternal things. It is the Heavenly Jerusalem, because there is nothing earthly about it. The kingdom consists of those things which

eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have they entered into the heart of man, for God has kept them for them that love Him, and He reveals them unto us by His Spirit. Formerly He wrote His law on tables of stone or on parchment, but now He writes it in our inward parts, even in our hearts. When the law of God was written outside of men, they did not keep it and God rejected them; when it is written inside of them, in their hearts, they will keep it. What folly to make disciplinary rules for the government of men's lives! If God writes not the law of love in their hearts, they will not keep these rules; and if this law is written in their hearts, the others are superfluous.

Not only is the Jewish nation a type of the Christian nation, but the Aaronic priesthood is a type of the same church of Christ. Among the Jews God chose one tribe in place of the first-born of all the twelve tribes. Every firstborn male child was considered peculiarly holy and consecrated to God. But the church of Christ is a royal priesthood, composed of priests and kings. It is a church composed entirely of firstborn. They are all peculiarly consecrated to God. The service of God is their whole business, and all their

time is holy time. The Sabbath law was null so far as the priests in the temple were concerned, for how could they consecrate but one-seventh of their time who consecrated all of it? This is equally true of Christians who are the antetypes of the Jewish priests. St. Paul declares that the "hand-writing of ordinances were against us and contrary to us," and that Christ took them away. Is it conceivable that when He established His pure spiritual religion that He would incorporate in it another system of ordinances of a like nature with those He took away, because they were against us? Because these things were useful to men in their spiritual childhood, will He force them upon spiritual men? Men destitute of spiritual understanding may see nothing but a carnal religion taught in the New Testament. Nothing better could be expected of them. But the spiritual man who discerneth all things sees differently. He sees a religion in which circumcision and uncircumcision are equally unavailing, and nothing avails but a new creature. In Christ, the attitude of the will, the state of the moral nature are essentially everything, and no fleshly rite has any value or meaning. Let others contend over "the doctrine of baptisms," the question of meats and drinks, and

the observance of holy days. The spiritual man, the man who has gone on to perfection, has relegated these matters to the same category as the one to which belongs the contention as to the proper place to worship, which agitated the Jews and the Samaritans, or the duty of washing the hands before eating, or the important doctrine of the baptism of pots and other culinary utensils.

There are some men claiming not only to be Christians, but Christians par excellence, who have much to say of the sin of eating swine's flesh, forgetting the declaration of the Apostle, "I know and am persuaded of the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself." Some men seem strangely to desire to be under the bondage of the old law. To such the Apostle Paul says, "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory, for these are the two covenants," etc. Read the whole passage in Gal. iv, "But what saith the Scripture: Cast out the bondwoman and her son; for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son



of the free woman." If men prefer to be sons of the bondwoman and consequently slaves to rites and ordinances, we must allow them their choice, though we may deplore it; but God's spiritual people are children of promise, and born of the free woman. "Jerusalem which is above, and which is free, is the mother of us all." Such are free by birth. Free from sin, free from slavish fear, free from all carnal rites or fleshly restrictions which could not make the comers thereunto perfect as pertaining to the conscience. Which were imposed on men only until the time of reformation: and if now observed they are self-imposed. Everything required of a man not necessary to his salvation is arbitrarily imposed on him. But this is not done since the time of reformation. Those duties only are now required of men which grow out of their relation to God and their fellows, which are called moral duties, and this moral law is fulfilled in one word, "love." God does not waste the time and strength of His spiritual people in doing unnecessary things. Those things which men call the nonessentials of Christianity do not belong to it at all. Here then is the proper division of the word of truth. The division between that which is past and that which is present;

between the old and the new; between the things which could be shaken and those which cannot be shaken; the typical and the antetypical; the natural and the spiritual; the temporal and the eternal. We have received a kingdom composed of those things only which cannot be moved.

## SPIRITUAL BABYLON

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BABYLON the great is fallen, is fallen; and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird. — Rev. xviii:2.

IT MAY be objected that this subject is not practical, being mentioned only in allegory. While this is true, it does not follow that its consideration will not be useful. God's people are commanded to come out of Babylon and it must be understood what this abomination is before it can be intelligently avoided. The subject will be approached in the spirit of honest inquiry and calmly and impartially considered. It must be apparent that the ancient city of Babylon is the type of this spiritual abomination, and that it possessed characteristics which were typical.

Babylon, the most eminent and celebrated city of the ancient world, was founded by Nimrod, and was situated on both sides of the Euphrates river in upper Chaldea, of which country and kingdom it was the capital. It was a large city, but its exact size cannot be known. It was surrounded by

a wall of great height and thickness of which various accounts are given by different historians, some making it twice as wide and high as others. It was probably not less than seventy-five feet high, and so thick that several chariots could be driven abreast on its top. It not only enclosed the city proper, but also a large extent of country used for the pasturage of flocks and herds. As the city was in this way, and by other means, largely supplied with victuals, and the river furnished an unfailing supply of water, it could not well be taken by siege, and its walls were so strong as to resist all attacks of the artillery then in use. As the walls could not be extended across the river, to prevent the access of enemies by this means, huge brazen gates were erected on the river banks, which met in the center of the stream and were there fastened together to prevent the passage of boats. Babylon being situated on the lower Euphrates, in the alluvial plain, possessed no quarries, and as rock could not be obtained anywhere in the neighborhood, the city and wall were built of sundried brick, a material easily obtained, but not very durable. As a result of its having been built of such perishable material, it is now entirely obliterated and its site, even, is with difficulty determined.

It was a city of great magnificence, especially under the second Assyrian empire, when it was greatly embellished by Nebuchadnezzar. He built a great palace, and the celebrated Hanging Gardens, counted one of the wonders of the world. These were built to please his Queen who was born in a mountainous country, and they imitated a hill or mountain. The city also contained the temple of Belus and the Tower of Babel.

There are three things pertaining to Babylon which are especially typical. *First.* Its origin. It originated in rebellion against God. Nimrod, its founder, was a mighty rebel against God. *Second.* The confusion of tongues which occurred while the Tower of Babel was being built. *Third.* It was the place of the captivity of God's people, who were carried away by Nebuchadnezzar. Another thing which was symbolical was the fall of Babylon. This does not mean its destruction, but its capture by an enemy. These points will be noticed in their order. Babylon is not only represented as a city, but also as a woman. This woman is represented as sitting on a scarlet-colored beast full of the names of blasphemy, and as holding a golden cup in her hand, and having engraved upon her forehead, "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of

harlots and abominations of the earth." Now in no case in Scripture is either a city or a woman used to represent a civil or political power. These are usually typified by some wild beast. Once, in Nebuchadnezzar's dream or vision, they are represented by a monster man. But a city is often used as a type of a church or ecclesiastical power. Thus Jerusalem is commonly used as a type of the church of Christ, sometimes under its other name, Zion. So also is a woman used for the same purpose. Sarah is a type of the church of Christ, Hagar of the Jewish church. The woman clothed with the sun is a type of the church of Christ, while Jezebel is a type of an apostate church. Babylon the city and Babylon the woman are types, then, of an ecclesiastical power.

In seeking for spiritual Babylon then we must look for a church or an ecclesiasticism. The first mark of this church power, to be true to the type, is rebellion or apostasy. As literal Babylon was founded in apostasy from God in civil government, so spiritual Babylon is founded in apostasy in church government. The form of government in the church of Christ is quite simple. It is a theocracy, using human instruments. Jesus Christ himself is the head of the body, the church. As the

head governs and controls the body, so Christ governs and controls the church. As instruments or agents He employs apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. These have no authority of their own, but only as they demonstrate that God speaks and works through and by them. This authority does not come down through a long line of predecessors, but is direct from God in the case of each one, as much so as if there had been no one preceding Him. Jesus the head must

“Move and actuate and guide —  
Divers gifts to each divide.”

In the exercise of this authority, each agent is directly responsible to God, and to Him alone. Unity of action is secured by union with the same head. This form of government gives little room for the exercise of personal ambition. The Apostles had a specific work and have no successors. Evangelists, prophets or preachers, pastors and teachers remain. Each pastor is an “episcopos” or bishop. As such he has no control over other pastors. The word “elder” is a term taken from the Jewish polity and is applied indiscriminately to pastors, evangelists, and even Apostles, as Peter claims to be also an elder. It is sometimes applied on account of age only: The deacons were simply serv-



ants of the church to look after temporal matters, and were not an order of the ministry as such, though they may have been preachers. They were made necessary on account of the increasing number of believers, and especially by the great number of the poor whose wants must be supplied. Where the number of believers is small, there is little or no need of deacons. The love of authority and power which is natural to man, gradually stole in, enticing these officers to assume "lordship over God's heritage" and to act without Divine authority. At first these instances were rare, but their number gradually increased, until they became the rule rather than the exception. The result was a division of believers into two classes, the rulers and the ruled, the clergy and the laity. I have no doubt that this teaching is the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which God hates; the word signifying a conquest of the people. As the priesthood increased their assumption of authority, claiming to act by power delegated to them by the Lord, they ceased to give any proof of Divine agency. Men could not recognize God speaking through them. The form of government was entirely changed; the theocracy was lost, and human authority was substituted for it. Another head was given to the

nominal church called the Pope, or the General Council, or the General Conference, or the General Synod. Christ became a mere figurehead without any authority or any active participation in the government. These governing bodies "change times and laws," establish dogmas, and otherwise take full control of what is called the church of Christ. While Christ was formally acknowledged as the head of the church, His authority was set at naught, His words disregarded, and His spirit entirely lost. Men who were worldly, unspiritual, and sometimes immoral and skeptical, were placed in authority, and ruled by pretended right, while their whole lives showed them to be enemies of God. The government of the church was subverted and this first mark of Babylon was plainly seen. Wherever men preach or teach or govern in the nominal church of Christ and their authority to do so is recognized, though they give no evidence of acting under the influence of the Holy Spirit, there is clearly seen the first mark of Babylon, rebellion and apostasy. Christ's headship has been usurped and His authority overthrown.

The second mark of Babylon is confusion. At the time of Nimrod's rebellion the whole earth, we are told, was of one speech and one language.

There seemed to be a fear of being scattered abroad, and to prevent this, we are told, they all united in building a city and a tower whose top should reach unto Heaven. The Lord, to prevent the accomplishment of their design, determined to frustrate it by confounding their language, so that they might not be able to understand each other's speech. This had the desired effect and produced their scatterment. Wherefore they left off building the tower, and the name of Babel was given it, that is, confusion. The city was called Babylon for the same reason. Unity among the people of God is according to the Divine plan. But it seems that unity among His enemies is not His will. "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered," is God's plan. Now can we find anything corresponding to this in ecclesiastical history? I think so. So soon as the apostasy in church government began, the city and tower began to be built. It is said of Nimrod that the beginning of his kingdom was Babylon. So when men began to deny Christ's authority in His church, they began establishing another authority in His place. They began building a church and formulating a creed or system of doctrine, that should take men to Heaven in some other way than by the strait gate and the

narrow way. Here then are the spiritual city and tower corresponding to the literal. A city builded not of living stones, and a tower which is not the antetype of the ladder Jacob saw. As I have already stated, Babylon was not built of stone, because this material was scarce and costly, but of sundried brick. "And brick they had for stone and slime they had for mortar." So spiritual Babylon is not built, as in the true church of Christ, of living stones, cemented by the love of the brethren, but of artificial stone or brick representing man-made Christians, counterfeit believers. They are not united together by the genuine mortar, but with slime, which the prophet calls untempered mortar. This apostate church to multiply conversions adopted many of the pagan customs and feasts, slightly changing them and giving them new names. Whole tribes were converted by edict, becoming Christians in name, while remaining pagan in life and conduct. Thus the city builded of such cheap material rapidly grew in size, while the theologians worked on the tower, inventing new dogmas, and contending over metaphysical distinctions. They introduced monasticism and the worship of images, the invocation of the saints, the celibacy of the clergy, the doctrine of the Immacu-

late Conception and other forms of Mariolatry; the confessional, the doctrine of merit and works of supererogation; invented several sacraments, and the doctrine of purgatory and many other tenets too numerous to mention. Thus the tower was rising to quite a height, though not yet completed. The popes claimed authority superior to the civil power and professed to absolve subjects from their allegiance to their sovereigns. Through their influence over the civil powers, they punished all who refused to bow to their authority. Such were excommunicated, and turned over to the civil power to be punished with imprisonment, torture, and death. All this was done to preserve the unity of the faith. Authority was substituted for reason, priestcraft lorded it over men's consciences, and thus men were prevented from being divided in opinion and doctrine. The Waldenses and Albigenses were persecuted with fire and sword under authority of the pope of Rome, who proclaimed a crusade against them, and promised a full pardon for all past sins to those who would engage in the murder of an innocent people. But God came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men builded. He declared that they would accomplish their purpose of ecclesiastical

unity, by the suppression of freedom of conscience, thus entirely destroying vital godliness, unless something were done to prevent it. And he said, "Go to, let us confound their language." Then were raised up John Huss and Jerome of Prague in Bohemia, who were burnt at the stake by the general council of Constance; and afterward Martin Luther, Melanchthon of Saxony, Zwingli of Switzerland, John Calvin of France, the English reformers and John Knox of Scotland, who began to speak different doctrinal languages, so that the Papists could not understand the Protestants and the Protestants could not understand each other. This caused a stoppage in the building of the tower, so that little has been done since. We do not know what Nimrod purposed naming the city he founded, but the Divine intervention gave it a name. We do know what men called their spiritual city before God interrupted their plans. They called it the Holy Catholic Church. But when God confounded their doctrinal language and divided and scattered them, their name became Babylon the Great. This blasting of the purpose of the builders and the division of sentiment preventing concert of action resulted in breaking the ecclesiastical shackles, and opened the way for free inquiry and

discussion, liberating men's consciences and producing good results. The results, however, were not wholly good; but an opportunity was given real saints to worship God in the Spirit. Unless men are under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, freedom of inquiry is productive of no better results than intellectual bondage is. Strife and confusion ensue, and men swing from a blind faith to skepticism and indifference. For a long time freedom of inquiry caused increasing strife and division; sects were multiplied. Religious zealots showed great earnestness, dividing over trivial matters. Theological discussions were loud and acrimonious. The more earnest men were the more ready they were to contend for trifles which were magnified into matters of importance. But this excess of doctrinal zeal wore itself out, and men began settling into religious indifference. The theological confusion was great and the "lo heres and lo theres" were loud and persistent. In the choice of a creed men were influenced more by education and tradition than by calm reason. This prevalence of religious teachings, unlike and often contradictory, a mixture of a little of God's truth with much of human opinion and speculation, furnishes us with the second mark of Babylon, confusion. The hypo-



crites and false professors, the unholy, world-loving men and women who constitute the large majority of the membership of the various sects of Christendom, are the bricks of which spiritual Babylon is composed. The various interests which bind men together in their organizations in the absence of real brotherly love are represented by the slime which took the place of mortar. Those various systems of doctrine which claim to save men in their sins, without holiness of heart or life, are represented by the Tower of Babel which was to reach up to Heaven.

The third distinguishing mark of Babylon was its being the place of captivity of God's people. "By the rivers of Babylon we sat down; yea, we wept when we remembered Zion."—Ps. cxxxvii: 1. After the destruction of Nineveh and the death of its last king Sardanapalus, the capital of the new Assyrian empire was removed to Babylon. The Medes were assisted in their assault upon Nineveh by the viceroy of Babylon who revolted from Sardanapalus, who after a vigorous defense, despairing of success, burnt himself in his palace. Nebuchadnezzar, the most noted monarch of the new dynasty, captured Jerusalem and carried off most of the inhabitants to Babylon. They were not taken as

slaves, but, according to the common practice of the Assyrian monarchs, they were transferred to a new province and others put in their places in Judea: the design being to discourage revolt. These Jews were captives in Babylon seventy years. Some of them, like Daniel, were preferred to places of authority and power, especially under the Persian conquerors of Babylon. But they were not allowed to return to their native land, until Cyrus issued his edict, permitting and assisting their restoration. This captivity of the Jews in Babylon is a type of the bondage of God's spiritual people in spiritual Babylon, which, as already intimated, consists of all those fragments into which the so-called Christian world was broken by the confusion of doctrines brought about by what is called the Reformation. These dissentient fragments taken together make up Babylon the Great. For more than four centuries God's real saved people were generally found in the sects. Though in their hearts they regretted and reprobated the confusion and the strife and wept when they remembered Zion, finding it difficult to sing the songs of Zion in a strange land, yet they saw no way out of captivity. And there was no way until God made one. Like John Wesley they deplored the heated strife

and jarring discords of theological discussion. They prayed,

“Let party names no more  
The Christian world o’erspread.”

Like Mr. Wesley, they were sick of opinions and loathed the frothy stuff. They longed and prayed for unity and peace. But their voices were drowned in the clamor, though their prayers reached the ear of Jehovah. Their numbers decreased and their ranks thinned, as many became reconciled to captivity and forgot Jerusalem. Babylon was good enough for them, and the hope of returning to Zion seemed but an iridescent dream. A few of the humbler sort still left their harps upon the willows exclaiming, “If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I esteem not Jerusalem above my chief joy.” But they were captives and the gates were still shut. They made efforts to escape from the incongruity and danger of their situation, separating themselves from one fellowship and forming another, but still failing to get out of Babylon. Their well-meant efforts only added to the confusion. Some, like Mr. Wesley, refused to form new sects, but, as in his case, their followers did it for them. Many efforts were made to bring about ecclesiastical

unity, all necessarily ending in failure. The way of escape was not yet open.

Another thing concerning Babylon which is typical is its fall. By the fall of Babylon, as has been already said, is not meant its destruction, but its capture by the Medes and Persians. This had to take place before God's people could be liberated. For about fifteen centuries Babylon had never been taken by siege or assault. It was considered impregnable. But during the reign of the despicable Belshazzar, it was attacked by the Medes and Persians. As the city could not be taken by force, Cyrus resorted to stratagem. By immense labor, a new channel for the river was dug, diverting most of its waters around the outside of the city walls. This made the water in the regular channel so shallow that the troops of Cyrus could pass in under the gates which crossed the river. They did this at night, and fell upon the infamous Belshazzar while he was feasting in his palace, desecrating the holy vessels of the Jewish temple. He was taken by surprise and slain, and thus God numbered his kingdom and finished it. Cyrus was favorably disposed toward the Jews, and is said to have been much pleased when shown the prophecy concerning him in the Holy Books of

the Israelites in which he was mentioned by name before he was born. (Isa. xlv: 39.) In this Scripture Cyrus is called God's shepherd, and is evidently a type of Christ. He issued an edict granting the Jews liberty to return to Judea and to rebuild the ruined capital. He also furnished them help to do this and protection from enemies. As I have already intimated, but comparatively few availed themselves of this opportunity. In the first place, many had been in Babylon so long that their temporal interests were identified with Babylon rather than with Jerusalem. Then they had lost much of their religious zeal. They were comfortable where they were and not disposed to undertake hardships for the sake of a sentiment. The journey would be long and hazardous and at the end they would find a desolate country and a city in ruins. Much self-denial and hard labor must be undergone before Jerusalem and its walls could be rebuilt. They would be in constant danger of assault from active enemies. Why leave security and comfort for such a condition of things. To worldly prudence the enterprise seemed Quixotic and unreasonable. So those who had many interests in Babylon refused to leave it. Only the poorer and meaner sort could be induced to follow

Nehemiah and Ezra back to the land of promise. After they reached Judea they had much trouble, and many trials, working on the walls of the city with implements of labor in one hand and weapons in the other. But religious zeal, a love of liberty and a hatred of Babylonish captivity carried them through, and in spite of their enemies the task of restoring the city was accomplished. No doubt those who remained in security and ease in Babylon, when they heard of the labors and sufferings of their brethren, took great credit to themselves for having sense enough to stay where they were. Jerusalem was rebuilt, and the Jewish nation forever cured of any inclination toward idolatry. The application of this type is obvious. In Rev. xviii, we read of an angel having great power, and the earth was enlightened with his glory. He cried mightily with a loud voice, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird." As the fall of literal Babylon was natural, so the fall of spiritual Babylon is spiritual. As has been said, God's true people were in Babylon and there was quite an amount of genuine spirituality in her. But the forces of evil constantly gained ground, evil men and

seducers waxing worse and worse until spiritual life was crushed. For a long time, though, much that was in Babylon was false and ungodly, yet spiritual men had much influence, and vital piety was esteemed and often honored. But worldliness gradually encroached, and skepticism grew apace, until faithfulness to God became a cause of reproach and brought contempt rather than honor. The enemies of true religion gained full control and the flood-gates of iniquity were opened. Worldliness and compromise with sin triumphed, and God's people could no longer stay in Babylon without partaking of her sins. Then came the voice from Heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues." Fifty years ago, such a thing as serving God outside of organized sects was almost, if not entirely, unheard of. But about that time the voice from Heaven began to be heard, the fall of Babylon becoming apparent. The mighty angel began announcing the fact, and thus in many places remote from each other, without any concert of action, God began calling His people out of Babylon. There were generally but few in any one place, and they often did not know that any others felt about the matter as they did



themselves. As in the case of the Jews in Babylon, those who came out were generally of little repute. Their want of harmony with their surroundings in Babylon had prevented their being esteemed and honored.

There were some exceptions to this rule, but this was the rule. But they longed for a pure church and for holy fellowship. They loathed the sins of Babylon, and were willing to undertake the task of rebuilding Jerusalem, and to undergo the derision of their enemies. They heard the call of the prophet: "Go through, go through the gates, prepare ye the way of the people. Cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people." Of course they were looked upon as troublers of Zion, as fanatics and dreamers. Their project was declared impracticable and hopeless. Nevertheless they felt that the Lord was bringing again Zion and that the prophets should see eye to eye. As in all cases where there is a movement in God's order, Satan imitated and caricatured it to cover it with reproach. This tended to frighten away such as loved the praise of men, and feared reproach and shame. But God's people have been called out of Babylon and she is being rapidly prepared for destruction. The

Jonathans, who sympathize with David but remain with Saul, being ashamed to be identified with an army of tatterdemalions, of insolvent debtors and discontented persons, will remain in Babylon and fall in her destruction. Those saints who have obeyed God's call are often called "comeouters," a name of great reproach in the eyes of men, but really a title of honor. No doubt many bear the name who do not merit it, but there will always be counterfeits of every valuable thing. There may be a few saints yet left in Babylon, who have not yet responded to the call, but this is open to doubt. To describe the present condition of Babylon is a task beyond my ability. I have not the command of adequate language. The description given by the Revelator is sufficiently clear and awful, and I will leave it at that.

I will next consider the other type of Babylon as described in Rev. xvii. A woman is described sitting upon a scarlet-colored beast full of names of blasphemy. She is dressed in purple and scarlet colored robes, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, with a golden cup in her hand. On her forehead is a name written, "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." In the last

verse of the chapter we are informed that this woman is identical with that great city which ruleth over the kings of the earth. She is then another type of the same things which have just been commented on. The first thing we will notice is the beast upon which the woman sits. It is described as scarlet colored, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns, and crowns upon its horns. In Rev. xii we have another beast described, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and crowns upon its heads. Their similarity in possessing seven heads and ten horns respectively identifies them as being closely related. The great red dragon, which is first mentioned as waiting to devour the manchild, is no doubt the pagan Roman government. The manchild which is to rule all nations with a rod of iron is a Christian civil government which came into being in the time of Constantine. Both beasts are represented as having heads and horns, though the heads really belong to the one and the horns to the other. On the dragon the horns are prophetic, and in the second beast the heads are historic. Both beasts have both heads and horns to show the identity, as being the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. The seven heads of the dragon

on which the crowns rest are the seven forms of government of the first Roman empire, which was mostly pagan. The first form of government in Rome was the kingly. This began with Numa Pompilius, the first king of Rome, and ended with the Tarquins. Tarquinius Superbus was killed by the elder Brutus because of his assault upon Brutus' daughter. The kings had become so oppressive and outrageous in their conduct, that they were execrated by the people, and the very name of king was forever hated by the Romans. They then adopted a form of government by ten men called Decemvirs. The Decemvirate continued but for a short time, and was succeeded by a government by consuls. Two consuls were chosen each year, who commanded the armies in war, which was almost continual. They were assisted in the government by the Senate. The consuls were principally military leaders. The Consulate lasted a long time, though sometimes interrupted by another form of government, called the Dictatorship. Cincinnatus was the first dictator. At the time of Hannibal's eruption into Italy, Fabius was chosen Dictator. The Roman state was on the verge of ruin; its armies commanded by its consuls were successively defeated, owing often to divided coun-

sels and jealousies. Fabius was then chosen Dictator and by his famous policy of delay ruined Hannibal. When the crisis was past, the consulate was again resumed and continued until the time of Marius and Sulla, who became Dictators. After them the fifth form of government was adopted, the Triumvirate, a government by three men. The first Triumvirate was composed of Julius Cæsar, Pompey, and Crassus. Cæsar chose Gaul; Pompey, Italy and Spain; and Crassus the far East. Both Cæsar and Pompey were famous as military leaders. Pompey, by his victories in Asia, having had conferred upon him by the Roman Senate the title of "The Great." Crassus was a business man of vast wealth, but he burned for military glory also. To obtain it he led an army against the Parthians, was defeated and slain, and his army almost destroyed. Cæsar and Pompey were left in control. They quarreled and levied war against each other, and at the battle of Pharsalia Pompey was totally defeated and fled to Egypt, where he was murdered. Julius Cæsar became the master of the Roman empire. He was an exceedingly able man. He pursued a conciliatory policy, gave the empire a good government, and among other notable things, he corrected the calendar. Had he been

content with the substance of power without its show, he might have lived long a blessing to his country. But he was vain and longed for kingly honors. This was fatal to him and he was assassinated in the senate house by a number of conspirators led by Brutus and Cassius. But they were compelled to flee from Rome, and the government fell into the hands of the second Triumvirate composed of Octavius Cæsar, Marcus Antonius, commonly called Mark Antony, and Lepidus. Octavius remained at Rome, Antony chose Asia for his share, Lepidus was soon overthrown by Octavius. Antony becoming infatuated with Cleopatra, queen of Egypt, after having married Octavia, the sister of Octavius, he and Octavius quarreled, and made war upon each other. At the battle of Actium, Antony was totally defeated. He fled to Egypt, and finding that Cleopatra had killed herself to escape imprisonment, and fearing she might be made to grace the conqueror's triumph, he also committed suicide. Thus Octavius Cæsar, the nephew of Julius Cæsar, was left sole master of the world. Though not as able, he was much more prudent than his uncle. He was careful not to assume the trappings of power; and while ruling the empire he always

deferred to the Roman Senate, a body jealous of its authority. He took the name of Augustus, and had conferred upon him by the Senate the title of Imperator, or Emperor. Thus was established the sixth form of government. This continued for several centuries, furnishing a few good emperors and many bad ones, some of them human monsters of iniquity. The empire greatly declined in power and extent, the emperors at length became extinct. The seventh form of government was called the Exarchate, and the capital was removed to Ravenna. This form did not long continue, and the first Roman empire perished. The seven heads which wore crowns were the Kingdom, the Decemvirate, the Consulate, the Dictatorship, the Triumvirate, the Empire, and the Exarchate.

In Rev. xiii we have a further description of the beast upon which the woman sat. It is described as being like a leopard, having feet like a bear and a mouth like a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his seat and great authority. This beast, which took the dragon's place, was the second Roman empire established by Charlemagne in 800 A. D. He was crowned in Rome, the seat of the dragon. Its being spotted like a leopard shows diversity. In having the mouth of



a lion and the feet of a bear, it is like the description given by the prophet Daniel of the first Roman empire. The names of blasphemy are those claims to holiness and Divine authority made by this empire. The ten horns represent the various kingdoms and states into which the empire was finally divided and correspond to the ten toes of the image which Nebuchadnezzar saw. The second Roman empire included nearly the whole of continental Europe, except what is now comprised in Russia, and a little of that empire. The British islands and Scandinavia were not really included. These divisions are not always the same. At present we might enumerate Spain, Portugal, France, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Germany, Austria, Greece. But as political changes are so constant, it is difficult to point them out definitely. The woman sitting on this beast is Babylon, the false church, and her attitude signifies her dependence upon, and her support by, the civil power. The fact of this support is historical and known to all, and therefore needs no comment. She is called the "great whore," because of her unfaithfulness to her nominal husband, the Lord Jesus Christ, and her fornications with human governments as described by the Revelator. These apostasies and

adulteries are so patent, that they are represented as being written upon her forehead. She openly denies her being repudiated by her husband, but says, "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." The "wine of the wrath of her fornication" with which she is said to have made all nations drunk is supposed to represent those love potions which such women were wont to give their lovers, which intoxicated them and inflamed and poisoned their blood. These are the false doctrines and fables which she has substituted for the truth of God; that truth which, like pure milk and wine, nourishes and edifies. These false teachings and false claims to fidelity have deceived the nations who recognize her claims to the exclusion of the true wife, who is treated as an impostor and a cheat. It takes a great deal of effrontery, with the proofs of her unfaithfulness so plainly exhibited, to lay claim to purity and innocence. But she is fully equal to the occasion and is abashed by nothing.

The destruction of Babylon, as described in Rev. xviii, is an event yet to take place. We are informed that with violence she shall be cast down and be seen again no more. That the merchants who were made rich by her delicacies shall weep

and mourn over her destruction because no man buyeth their merchandise any more. This is, no doubt, to be understood in a metaphorical sense, just as the city is figurative. The natural products said to be sold by these merchants must also represent spiritual things. The merchants of Babylon are false prophets who substitute fables for the truth of God, and sell them for salaries large and small. The things they sell are very precious to those who buy them, and they are willing to pay large prices for them. As for God's people, they buy the truth. The mourning of these merchants when Babylon is cast down as a millstone thrown into the sea will be very genuine. Their lucrative occupations will be gone forever; their honors lost, their hope of gain blasted. The event will be awful, yet God's people are exhorted to rejoice at it. "Rejoice over her, ye heavens, and ye holy apostles and prophets." The means for accomplishing her destruction are described in Rev. xvii. We are told that the ten horns or kingdoms shall hate the whore and make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire. The ten horns agreeing and giving all their power unto the beast signifies that civil government shall be given much more authority than it has exercised.

This foreshadows socialism, which advocates the giving to government the exercise of all those rights which are now enjoyed by private individuals: such as the ownership of all the sources of production, and the facilities for distribution, etc. Under socialism the state will own everything and have all authority. Socialism is also bitterly opposed to the nominal church, and will rob her of all her possessions and destroy her when it gains the power. This condition of things is obviously portending, and this prophecy will speedily be fulfilled. The general war which is universally expected will give socialists the opportunity to overthrow the present political system, when Babylon will meet her doom.

At the time of writing this prophecy, the Roman empire, the sixth head, was then in existence. So it is said the sixth is, and the seventh is not yet come. The second empire was the eighth and yet of the seven. That is, was the same form of government as one of the seven gone before, which is true; as it was identical with the sixth form, or the empire. But little of this prophecy yet remains to be fulfilled, that concerning Babylon's destruction. May it not be long delayed, that Jesus may come to reign, that His people may reign with him. "Even so come, Lord Jesus."

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